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# Report on the Administration of Bengal

# 1926-27

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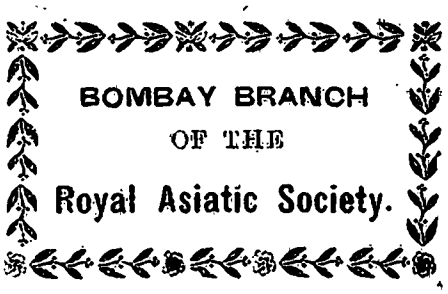


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# Government of Bengal

## Revenue Department

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# Bengal Administration Report, 1926-27.

## Introduction.

The Report is, as usual, divided into two parts. Part I gives a summary of the most notable facts of the financial year under review and in some matters., *e.g.*, the Political conditions, the Press, the Legislative Council, brings the record down to the end of 1927. In Part II, a detailed account is given of the various branches of administration based on departmental reports. Where necessary, references have been given to the more comprehensive Administration Report of 1921-22, for supplementary information.

## Part I.—General Summary.

### I.—Political Conditions.

The election at the end of 1926 gave further proof, if any were needed, that the Swarajists were the best equipped, and the best organised political party in Bengal. They dominated the elections everywhere, and captured 35 out of 46 general seats. The Muhammadans were grouped round various leaders, of whom the two principal each claimed to have a larger following than his rival. True to their policy, the Swarajists were determined to obstruct the working of dyarchy, but the Responsivists and Muhammadans were apparently anxious to give the system a further trial, at any rate until the composition of the Ministry was disclosed. The new Council met on the 10th of January, 1927, and on the following day was addressed by His Excellency Lord Lytton. His Excellency explained that it was " for the Council to decide whether it wished to resume control of the transferred subjects through the medium of Ministers." To give it the earliest possible opportunity of expressing its wishes in this matter, an immediate supplementary demand for the salary of two Ministers would be made. Should the Council desire to increase the number of Ministers it could do so by following the

Restoration of dyarchy.

customary procedure and by voting the necessary funds. The election as President of a prominent member of the Liberal party indicated that the Swaraj party was not for the moment in the ascendant and its efforts to prevent the grant of Ministers' salaries were unavailing. The usual arguments were skilfully used—that dyarchy is unworkable and has failed; that Ministers are in any event mere tools in the hands of the bureaucracy and are reduced to the position of "dumb spectators of the struggle between the people and the Government;" and that fresh injury had been heaped on the province "by the arrest of our most valuable public workers." On the other hand, Sir Abd-ur-Rahim made the striking admission that the Moslem groups had been returned to the Council to make the fullest use of the Constitution, and his main criticism was that a Ministry of two members had little or no chance of undertaking the constructive political work so essential to stability. The motion that the grant for salaries be refused was thrown out by 94 to 38 votes, and dyarchy was once more restored in Bengal.

Formation of the Ministry.

2. The formation of the Ministry aroused the keenest public interest. It was difficult to see how the most prominent leader on the Muhammadan side could be left out. His unswerving loyalty to his community, the consistency of his policy, and the determination with which he pursued his object secured for Sir Abd-ur-Rahim a very strong following. On the other hand, his uncompromising views alienated Hindu feeling, and it was extremely difficult to find a Hindu leader who would co-operate with him. For this reason the attempt to include Sir Abd-ur-Rahim in a Ministry broke down, and he himself, though given an opportunity, was unable to find a suitable Hindu colleague. The only alternative, therefore, was to fall back on Mr. A. K. Ghuznavi, who had the support of the Central Moslem party and was able to find a common basis of policy with Mr. B. Chakravarti. The incidents surrounding the formation of this Ministry, which was sworn in on the 27th of January, aroused much feeling. Many Muhammadans were incensed at the conduct of Mr. Ghuznavi, whom they regarded as a renegade and an opponent of all that Sir Abd-ur-Rahim represented. They were apparently deeply imbued with the idea that hostility to Sir Abd-ur-Rahim on the part of the Hindus was communal rather than personal in character and origin. At meetings held in Calcutta and throughout the province, Mr. Ghuznavi was censured in no unmeasured terms, and he was personally subjected to considerable annoyance. Equally Mr. Chakravarti incurred severe criticism for accepting office with Mr. Ghuznavi. Nevertheless, the Ministry survived the debates on the budget, which was passed practically without modification. The Swarajists and the

Rahimites found themselves in a decided minority, and their only successes were reductions in the votes connected with the Governor's personal establishment. But the Ministry was soon to encounter rough weather, and in August it foundered in circumstances that would have sent to the bottom a more seaworthy craft.

3. Before dealing with the fall of the Ministry, we may glance rapidly at the development of events in other directions. At the beginning of the year dissension had crept into the Swaraj party. Mr. Sasmal as Secretary had failed to secure unanimous support. His condemnation of revolutionary methods in the preceding year had alienated many, and an attempt to restore his prestige by a tardy recantation came too late. The approaching elections for the Calcutta Corporation brought the cleavage into strong relief. The Congress Committee were apparently unable to agree regarding their candidates, and finally at the suggestion of the All-India Committee, a Corporation Election Board was constituted. The Sasmalites, however, were not prepared to accept its decisions, and proceeded to run their own candidates. The "Big Five" and the "Karmi Sangha" acted with great vigour, and many meetings were held throughout the city, a striking feature being that the claims of candidates were based on the good work that had actually been accomplished in the municipal sphere. Higher politics were for the moment forgotten. Government and the Ministry were left alone, and the election was fought substantially on the merits of the work already done by the Swaraj party. The moment the elections were over, however, the Swaraj politicians again came to the front, and took complete charge of the situation. Whether the Corporation will ever be able to free itself from this baneful influence the future alone can tell.

The Swaraj party.

Calcutta Municipal Elections.

4. The municipal elections resulted in a sweeping victory for the "Big Five," and the depression that set in among the Sasmalites was accentuated by their failure to secure a footing in the new committee of the party. An attempt was made by Mr. Sasmal and his friends to retain possession of the Congress office, and when the opposition went there to hold a meeting, they found the premises in a state of defence. Another venue was therefore selected, and Babu Akhil Chandra Datta was elected President. The annual meeting of the Provincial Congress was now drawing on apace, and Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta was chosen to preside. But owing to the disputes with Mr. Sasmal's party, he declined to take any part in the Conference, which was held at Maju on the 16th and 17th of April. The popular estimate of its value and the personal influence of its principal organisers may be deduced from the fact that only one thousand delegates

The Congress Conference at Maju.

attended instead of an expected ten thousand. The proceedings were marred by an unseemly squabble with the volunteers, a reduction in whose numbers was indicated as a measure of economy. Events at the Congress call for little comment. The estimate put on them by the Swaraj party itself is a sufficient indication of their futility, and with their failure at Maju Mr. Sasmal's party practically disappeared. The formation of the Bengal Congress Republican party by Professor J. L. Banerjee out of the shattered remnants of the Sasmalites had little effect on the main party, and its leader Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta was strong enough in spite of criticism to appear on the same platform with His Excellency the Governor to inaugurate a compaign to raise funds for the protection of minor girls from the dangers that beset them in Calcutta. The leaders and the " Karmi Sangha " had consolidated their position. In the Corporation they were supreme. They had the support of the principal men of position and influence in the party, and they were thus ready to present a united front when the Legislature met in August.

**Kushtia.**

5. The Muhammadan leaders were meantime absorbed in matters more directly communal in character. The question of music before mosques had not been settled. At the beginning of the year in Kushtia a procession passed a mosque with the customary musical observances, and the local Muhammadans promptly replied by a public slaughter of cows. At Patuakhali *Satyagraha* continued its apparently unending course, the Hindus refusing either to abide by their previous custom or to resort to the Civil Courts for a decision. Bitter feelings had been roused throughout the district, and the tension spread rapidly over the province. The spontaneity of heated outbursts in the most unlikely places indicates that communal feeling is deep-seated, but that the slightest incitement suffices to bring it rapidly to the surface. This aspect of the problem is brought into stronger relief by the perplexing alternatives open to the authorities in deciding whether in any particular case a procession should be allowed to pass a mosque with music. If past practice be taken as a guide, then orders must necessarily differ from place to place. The agitators on both sides naturally take advantage of this position, and allege that the intention of Government is to exacerbate communal feeling by yielding to one side or the other as may seem most likely to promote the success of the policy, " divide and rule." The movement extended to colleges and schools, where Hindu and Muhammadan students respectively claimed to exercise religious observances in the college compounds, while each party at the same time declared that its religious susceptibilities would be deeply wounded should the other carry

out its intentions. In many places shrines or mosques were defiled, and numberless petty incidents took place—apparently the outcome of a widespread intention to insult and annoy. In February a dispute near a mosque in Pirojpur (Barisal) led to a riot, and the local police force had to be temporarily strengthened. The decision of the Magistrate regarding the local custom in that case was unacceptable to the Muhammadan leaders, who issued a leaflet proclaiming a *hartal* on the 6th March, a date which coincided with the *Saraswati Puja*. They insisted on carrying out the programme in spite of the efforts of the District Magistrate to dissuade them from such a dangerous course. Large crowds of armed men assembled in many places, and serious trouble was averted only with the utmost difficulty. Pirojpur. Barisal.

6. At Ponabalia in the district of Bakarganj there is a shrine of some eminence at which a *mela* is held on the occasion of the *Sivaratri*, the normal attendance being about twenty thousand. There is also a small mosque near by, on the boundary of village Kulkati at some distance from the *mela* ground, but close to the public road used by the pilgrims. Enquiries have established the fact that there was never any custom that processions should cease music while passing this mosque, but in view of the tension throughout the district, it is not surprising that a number of Muhammadans assembled in the sacred building on the *mela* day firmly resolved to enforce silence on passing pilgrims. On the morning of the 2nd March, a small Hindu procession arrived, and was halted at some distance from the mosque, while the Sub-divisional Officer, and later the District Magistrate, endeavoured to induce the Muhammadans to recognise its right to pass with the usual observances. The crowd steadily increased, and a crisis rapidly developed. In anticipation of trouble a small detachment of the Eastern Bengal Frontier Rifles had been stationed in the neighbourhood, and finally it had to be called in to support the reasonable claim of the procession to a right of way. The obstructionists were exceedingly truculent, and the police were compelled to use firearms. In the confusion 37 rounds were fired, and seventeen of the rioters were killed. This incident aroused the wildest excitement throughout the province. Protest meetings were held everywhere, and an insistent demand was made that the Muhammadan Minister should resign. The Hindu leaders, on the other hand, while not positively defending the police, agreed that the victims of the disturbance had brought the punishment on themselves by their truculent and defiant behaviour, and the resolve of the District Magistrate to ensure a safe passage for the Hindu procession was universally approved by that community. Ponabalia.

Palassipara.

7. Additional fuel was not lacking to increase the heat of the moment. In July fierce rioting took place at Palassipara, in Nadia. This trouble originated in a dispute between rival zemindars which rapidly took on a communal bias. Advantage was taken of a few local cases of *Korbani* to inflame Hindu feeling, and the dispute rapidly developed into a wild outburst of rioting and arson, in which large numbers of people took part and much property was destroyed. In Comilla in August the eternal question of music before mosques was the bone of contention. Several open conflicts took place in the streets and some shops were looted. All these incidents led to incessant attacks of increasing bitterness on the Muhammadan Minister, for his alleged inactivity in protecting his co-religionists. To strengthen his position, Sir Abd-ur-Rahim had resigned his seat in the Council in March, after the Kulkati affair, and had returned from his constituency with a fresh mandate in support of his policy. The natural results were a great accession of strength to Sir Abd-ur-Rahim's party in the Council, and an alliance with the Swarajists in opposition to the Ministry. This combination, however, existed only for the particular object of bringing about the downfall of Mr. Ghuznavi. In other directions communalism had been so rampant, that the cleavage between the Hindu and Muhammadan elements was more deeply marked than ever.

Comilla.

Bengal National Bank.

8. The failure of the Bengal National Bank in June weakened the position of Mr. Chakravarti whose personal fortunes were closely linked with those of the bank. Many who had taken shares or made deposits from patriotic motives imputed responsibility to Mr. Chakravarti for the loss of their money, and the Swarajists were naturally not backward in seizing upon this excuse for attacking him. The result was that the Ministry fell on the 23rd August, 1927.. It is important to emphasize the factors which led to the establishment of such a strong opposition in a Council, which only in March had signified its intention of supporting a Ministry. As has been shown, the Muhammadans had their own reasons for ousting Mr. Ghuznavi. The Swarajists on principle objected to dyarchy, whoever the Ministers might be, and in addition they urged that Mr. Chakravarti's connection with the Bengal National Bank was not such as to inspire confidence. In the debate, too, there were disquieting hints that improper methods to secure votes had been adopted, it being alleged that promises of preferment were made to members of the Council or their friends, and that nominations to public office, for example, in local and district boards, had been held up until support was guaranteed. This sinister element in the discussion is not without significance, and while it is universally recognised

Fall of the Ministry.

that party Government involves and indeed necessitates the appointment to public office of party adherents if the political machine is to work smoothly, nevertheless there seems rightly or wrongly to be an uneasy feeling in the public mind that ministerial action in administrative matters is too often dictated rather by private and personal interests than by devotion to the public weal. The initiative does not necessarily emanate from those in office. There is apparently an element in political life, which is prepared to exploit to its own advantage the necessities of political leaders, and some of the opponents of the Ministry were themselves suspected of bringing improper influences to bear on doubtful supporters.

Disruptive tendencies.

9. Apart from the events which undermined the Ministry and brought the Rahimites and the Swarajists temporarily into one lobby there was a series of other incidents, which maintained public interest at a high level. As between the Muhammadans and the Hindus many of these had a distinctly disruptive effect. Ponabalia and Palassipara could not be forgotten. The decision in the *Rangila Rasul* case consolidated the Muhammadan groups, and brought before them more strongly than ever the communal character of their position, and the necessity of fighting for the enforcement of their traditional claims. The author of *Rangila Rasul* purported to give an historical account of the life of the Prophet, which was regarded as defamatory by his followers. The Punjab High Court held that the writer had not transgressed the fair limits of historical criticism,—a decision which caused intense resentment and gave rise to a demand for penal legislation against those who abuse or defame the author of any religion. This proposal is certainly not to the discredit of the communal spirit. The more sinister features of communalism, however, were revealed in the agitation which followed the conviction of the murderer of Swami Sraddhananda. This subject continued to excite the Muhammadan press after the dismissal of the appeal right up to the date of execution—an event, which was marked by unseemly disturbances outside the jail at Delhi. The *Soltan* declared that "if Abdur Rashid had reason to believe that the Swami was an enemy of Islam and of the country, and if he had been goaded to this deed by his conscience, then he is innocent both to his conscience and his religion, although guilty in the eye of the law." The Hindu view was expressed by the *Bishwabarta*, that Indian Moslems still believed that "the assassination of *Kafirs* is an injunction of the Koran, and that paradise may easily be gained through it. Abdur Rashid would never have assassinated Swami Sraddhananda if he had not this firm conviction that the act, besides protecting Islam, would ensure paradise

Rangila Rasul Case.

Conviction and Execution of Abdur Rashid.

for him." With characteristic ingenuity the argument was developed on both sides. The Muhammadan leaders found in the promoters of the *Suddhi* and *Sangathan* movements the root-cause of the misguided activities of Swami Sraddhananda, while the other side did not hesitate to attribute the crime of Abdur Rashid to the tenets of Islam itself, and to the incitement of its religious leaders. When conflicting political principles have their roots in religious belief, it is indeed difficult to find common ground for a compromise.

All-India Congress Committee meeting.

10. Compared with the sordid aspects of communalism that found expression in riots, slanderous invective and crime, the efforts to find a solution of the problem were weak and ineffective. The All-India Congress Committee meeting at Bombay on the 15th of May passed a resolution on joint electorates, with which no one was satisfied. It was realised, of course, that the reservation of seats for the different communities on a population basis is not an ideal arrangement, since " it presupposes that the different communities have separate interests, which can only be adequately safeguarded by men of particular religious persuasions." Nevertheless, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* hailed the acceptance of joint electorates " as a signal achievement for the cause of nationalism." Hindu opinion, however, was not unanimous. The *Ananda Bazar Patrika* regarded the device as nothing more than a makeshift, which did not remove the root-cause of the trouble. As a preliminary to the settlement of the problem, that paper demanded that the leaders should put a stop to " mediæval barbarity " in the name of religion, and must bring to light " the despicable conspiracy which is responsible for breaking Hindu gods and defiling Hindu temples at the dead of night." This sharp division of opinion among the Hindus was accompanied by an equally intense dissatisfaction amongst the Muhammadans. " Nobody need be told," said one paper, " that the proposal for joint electorates is intended to destroy the character, strength and individuality of the Moslems." The Unity Conferences held at Simla and Calcutta did little to allay the bitterness of feeling, and a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Calcutta was equally futile. The attendance was poor, and the results were not such as could command universal assent. The suspicion of the Muhammadans steadily deepened that they had nothing to hope for in joint deliberations. Their more immediate grievances loomed large before them. The alleged complicity of the Hindu leaders in the *Suddhi Sangathan* movement was widely proclaimed; the question of music before mosques had not been solved to their satisfaction, and the offers made to them were not acceptable. In Calcutta the right of sacrifice in certain mosques is still forbidden,

Unity Conferences at Simla and Calcutta.

and the only course which the Muhammadan party can see before it, is to continue the struggle single-handed for what they conceive to be their own rights and privileges. Well might the *Ananda Bazar Patrika* cry out that communal selfishness has permeated the whole country, and that the future is indeed dark!

The *Sivalingam* affair.

11. The Hindu community was likewise not without a source of consolidation in the *Sivalingam* affair in Calcutta. A shrine on the Maidan had been demolished by the Public Works Department as an encroachment on public ground. Of this act of alleged desecration full advantage was taken. Emergency meetings were held, and elaborate arrangements made to assert the rights of the Hindu community. Fortunately His Excellency the Governor intervened at the right moment, and his order that the shrine should be restored was received with universal satisfaction. It is something to be thankful for that the *Sivalingam* affair has not been permanently added to the political stock-in-trade of the professional agitator.

The Detenus.

12. Throughout the year a continuous agitation was maintained in the interests of detenus under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, and on the 22nd of February a motion for their release was passed in the Legislative Council by 71 to 26 votes. It is perhaps worth noting that their silence in the debate, and their omission to vote on the resolution, were subsequently given great prominence in the August resolution of "No Confidence" in the Ministers. On this question of detention without public trial all that can be said has already been said, and the only point of interest is the policy actually pursued. His Excellency the Governor's pronouncement in the Council Chamber on the 23rd August is therefore of great significance:—

"..... after consultation with my Government, I considered that the conditions prevailing in Bengal justified an acceleration of the rate of release and action was taken accordingly.

I find that at the end of March this year, there were—

In Jail—54 under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, and 16 under Regulation III.

To-day there are 32 under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, and 8 under Regulation III.

At the end of March this year 26 had been released from restraint. To-day the number stands at 60.

Provided no untoward event occurs, and the conditions at present prevailing in Bengal continue and the conduct of those released justifies the action taken in their cases, I hope that a large number of those now detained will have been transferred or released before the end of the year.

I shall continue to give my own personal attention to each individual case."

It is perhaps sufficient to say that at the end of December, 1927, there were in jail only five State prisoners, and sixteen detenus, while the number of the latter in village domicile had been reduced to twenty-seven. The corresponding figures for December, 1926, were sixteen, sixty-nine, and fifty-five, respectively. Among those released was Mr. S. C. Bose, formerly chief executive officer of Calcutta Corporation and now president of the Bengal Congress Committee.

**Formation of a new Ministry.**

13. After the collapse of the Ministry in August negotiations to replace it proceeded somewhat slowly. Apparently it was impossible to find any basis on which a Hindu leader could co-operate with Sir Abd-ur-Rahim. Finally, however, Sir P. C. Mitter undertook the thankless task of office along with Nawab Musharruf Hosain, Khan Bahadur. The new Ministers were sworn in on the 12th October, and at the end of the year were still in office. The Ministry has had no time to show its mettle, but apparently it can rely on the support of the Muhammadan party generally, although some members of the Central Moslem group appear to be rather fickle in their allegiance. On the other hand, the moderate element among the Hindus cannot but recognise the experience and ability of Sir P. C. Mitter, whose return to office means a substantial accession of strength to Government. It cannot be claimed, however, that the composition of the Ministry aroused public enthusiasm, and the bitter personal element introduced into the proceedings of the December session does not presage smooth sailing in the immediate future. Possibly the breakdown of the proposed Swarajist attack had irritated those who proceeded to take an easy revenge by harassing the Ministers, more particularly at question time. Further, the severe financial stringency that still prevails deprives any Ministry whatsoever of any chance of proving its capacity, and thereby attracting the support of those who are eager for progress in general administration. Nevertheless, there seems to be on the whole a general desire to give the Ministry a fair chance to make good, and the year closed with dyarchy in operation, though on a somewhat shaky foundation, which may crumble away at any moment.

14. The establishment of the new Ministry was perhaps helped by universal absorption in a more exciting theme which relieved the monotony of the rainy season. In her book "Mother India" Miss Mayo describes the results of her investigations into various aspects of home life, more particularly amongst the Hindu community. Her conclusions that Hindu married women are subjected to treatment unworthy of a civilised people aroused great resentment and indignation. Press reviewers who had discussed the book on its merits and had called attention to the various lines of thought and inquiry, opened up by Miss Mayo's allegations, came in for a share of the abuse. On the 4th September an enthusiastic mass meeting was held at the Town Hall in Calcutta. The tables were turned on Western nations by forcible reminders that the standard of moral conduct in Europe is far from perfect, and that indeed many cesspools of iniquity could be found in all the great cities of modern civilisation. The fact that Miss Mayo had been given access to the library of the India Office, combined with her views on the capacity of the people of India for self-government, gave rise to a widespread allegation that her inspiration emanated from the British Government. The Statutory Commission on the Reforms would soon be appointed, and it was suggested that Miss Mayo's book was nothing more or less than a vile and wicked piece of propaganda on the part of a ruling race. In Calcutta Corporation, after an interesting debate, the book was condemned with acclamation. This excitement over what was after all the private work of an earnest social inquirer affords a striking proof of the great and increasing sensitiveness of public opinion in Bengal. The controversy itself is of less interest than the manner in which it was conducted. The merits of the case were irrelevant; the truth or otherwise of the allegations was immaterial. The source and strength of the opposition lay in a firm determination that India will not tolerate the criticism of any outsider on its customs, practices, morals or laws. Therein lies the chief lesson of the episode. "Mother India".

15. All the excitements of the year, however, were eclipsed in importance by the announcement in November of the composition of the Statutory Commission under the Reforms Act. Up to the date of the announcement, proposals and suggestions had been based largely on the assumption that the Commission would be of mixed composition. The departure from tradition and practice in this respect took the country by surprise, and was met with unyielding opposition. A widespread call for boycott went round. Politicians of all classes rushed headlong into one camp, and before many days had passed, almost every responsible leader, and many public bodies had committed themselves to an adamantine opposition to the Commission, and a complete boycott of all Statutory Commission.

its proceedings. This attitude is undoubtedly strengthened by a recognition of the fact that India herself is unable to frame any form of constitution, for which even a reasonable measure of support would be forthcoming. Hence the fear that the Commission will likewise fail to do so, is based on convictions derived from personal knowledge of the difficulties of the problem. In Bengal, however, the Central Moslem party led by Mr. Ghuznavi is prepared to make the best of the situation, although it cannot approve of the composition of the Commission. The leaders of liberal thought, too, and the representatives of the depressed classes were not slow in extending a welcome, and there are not wanting signs that when the real nature of the proposals is better understood, others will come round to Mr. Ghuznavi's views in this matter—though it would be too much to expect the Swaraj party in Bengal to retract its policy. The boycott of the Commission is a natural sequel to the determination of the party to have nothing to do with dyarchy. It will operate no system in which it does not play a principal part, and the Statutory Commission therefore falls under its ban. The consistent policy of the Swaraj party in this respect carries with it the great advantages of simplicity and unity. If other parties were equally consistent politics in Bengal would rapidly reap the benefit. Unhappily, the kaleidoscopic changes in political groups and opinions prevent the formation of any other strong political unit which might hold its own against the Swaraj leaders and their supporters. In the natural course of events the inherent perversity of human nature will itself provide an opposition if personal interests fail to do so earlier. But there are no signs of this at present, and in its attitude towards the Commission Bengal will probably be guided largely by the views of the non-co-operators.

Summary.

16. Broadly, the distinctive tendencies of the year are now apparent. On the one hand, hostility to the "Chakravarty-Ghuznavi" Ministry, "Mother India," and the Simon Commission brought Hindus and Muhammadans together on a common platform. On the other, the failure to arrive at a working compromise on communal differences and the disruptive effect of communal conflict drove the two parties more widely apart. The Muhammadan leaders are not satisfied with the Congress policy. At a meeting with the president in November, they demanded that the Congress should be neutral in communal matters, and that Muhammadans should participate to a greater extent in its executive operations. The decisions of the Unity Conference are utterly unacceptable to both parties, and an ominous feature at the close of the year has been the opposition of various Hindu Sabhas to the decisions of the Swaraj party on communal questions. It is apparently felt that the leaders of the Hindu Sabha are more

competent to give an opinion on religious matters than any political caucus. This feeling was emphasised in the "Sraddhananda" week in December, when meetings were held in various places devoted to "Suddhi-Sangathan," and the question of the protection of Hindu women. In Calcutta open reference was made to Muhammadan oppression in the past history of India, and in Nadia and elsewhere the Hindu Sabha protested strongly against the decision of the Congress Committee and the Unity Conference regarding music before mosques, and the slaughter of cows. It is not impossible, therefore, that communalism may become more bitter as it assumes more definitely a religious aspect. In previous years it was possible to frame pacts or agreements, by which an equitable settlement of claims could be secured, more particularly with regard to such mundane questions as communal representation and the reservation of appointments. But if the dispute is moved more definitely on to religious grounds, on which compromise is impossible, the outlook is more than gloomy. Unhappily, too, the unifying influences of the year are of a temporary character, while the disruptive forces are more than likely to create a permanent gap. On the other hand, the last half of the year saw few outbreaks of violence and at Palassipara in Nadia, Pabna and elsewhere, the spirit of compromise definitely emerged, and solved local problems satisfactorily without leaving any remnant of bitterness. Some degree of moderation in the press was also discernible, and communal animosities seemed to die down as the year closed. Whether the Statutory Commission will be able to solve this perplexing problem remains to be seen, but the great danger is that in the search for a solution, communal differences will be brought into ever sharper relief against a stormy background of religious perversity, and perhaps of violent crime.

## II.—Police.

Police.

17. The conflicting communal appeals for special protection that distinguish the year resulted in the police receiving from one or other section of the press and the public a measure of approval, to which it has hitherto been unaccustomed. Revolutionary crime was not quite so prominent, though the Sukea Street bomb case indicated that anarchism still lurks in secret places. In other two important investigations, dangerous explosives were found, and in a third a return to the practice of raising funds for the terrorist movement by dacoity was exposed. The ramifications of the activities of Bengal revolutionaries were disclosed in the Kakori dacoity case in the United Provinces. Significant discoveries at Deoghar in Bihar being still the subject matter of

judicial proceedings, it is sufficient to observe that here again a close connection with Bengal is alleged, the majority of the accused belonging to this province. The press, as usual, expressed its utter disbelief in these detections, and indeed went so far as to suggest that a discovery of bombs and explosives is conveniently made whenever the agitation for the release of detenus seems to be on the eve of possible success. The Criminal Investigation Department is represented as taking an almost fiendish delight in the fabrication of false evidence to support unfounded charges, though no explanation of such an amazing perversion of duty is ever offered or suggested by a press, which itself recognises no obligation whatever to justify or prove the most astounding and libellous allegations. This attitude towards the police has developed into a habit, which naturally persists even although the occasions for its manifestation were comparatively few during the year. On the other hand, many opportunities for approval of police activities were afforded by the success with which communal difficulties were met and overcome. It is true no calls were made on the Calcutta police to suppress any serious disorder arising from this cause. But this immunity from violence on festival days was undoubtedly due to elaborate precautionary measures, which a leading paper grudgingly admitted to be " not unsatisfactory," a tribute which might have been more generously expressed. On the occasion of the *Bakr-Id*, resentment on the part of Muhammadans to the prohibition of *korbani* in certain mosques gave rise to a critical situation, and an outbreak of violence was prevented only by an admirable display of tact and firmness on the part of the authorities. Such incidents cannot but have a useful effect in bringing home to the more law-abiding section of the populace the extent to which their peace and security depend upon an efficient and vigilant police.

18. The riot at Kulkati in Bakerganj has already been mentioned. Order was very quickly restored in the district, and at Palassipara in Nadia, and Comilla in Tippera, the police force had little difficulty in dealing with the situation. Criticism of their conduct was purely communal in character, and in both Nadia and Tippera, neither party was able to impute blame. When the Kulkati firing was debated in the Council, the unusual spectacle was witnessed of Hindu Swarajists refusing to vote in favour of the motion for the adjournment of the House, although they were careful to explain that nothing was farther from their thoughts than to defend the police. The press was in a similar dilemma, and the only way of escape was to throw on Government generally the entire blame for the growing intensity of communal feeling. The claims of the police to an ungrudging recognition of the faithful discharge of trying and difficult duties were

thus evaded, which at the same time the convenient discovery of a fresh stick with which to beat Government was welcomed as a useful addition to the armoury of the irreconcilables.

19. A feature of the year was the posting of additional police in Pabna, Nadia and several thanas in Bakerganj. These measures cannot but be unpalatable to the people who have to bear the cost, and a source of anxiety to those who are responsible for the preservation of good relations between the public and the police. There seems to be no end to the evil results of communal hatred.

20. The number of defence parties continues to increase steadily, there being 2,100 in operation at the end of the year 1926. These parties effected no fewer than 144 arrests, of which 113 were made without the aid of the police. The development of these auxiliary aids to the regular police is a gratifying feature of recent years, and possibly in course of time these organisations by bridging the gulf between the public and the police, will secure for the latter a greater measure of good will and support. The growth of these parties, unfortunately, has been offset by an increasing difficulty in obtaining regular service from the rural police. The establishment of union boards has led to a division of authority, and some relaxation of discipline, which militate against sound police work both in the preventive and detective branches. No satisfactory solution of this problem has yet been found, and the difficulty is likely to increase in the immediate future. The health and housing of the mufassal police force continued to be a source of anxiety. The difficulties are not lessened by the divergence on this subject between professional police opinion and the views of legislators. Crowded hospitals, lack of mosquito nets and tumble-down buildings seriously impair the health of the force. The opposition in the Legislature are never tired of referring to a pampered police, for whom every luxury is provided at an extravagant cost. The utter absence of reality in these allegations creates a feeling of despair that the provincial police will ever be permitted to work under conditions, which would enable it to discharge its primary duties to the satisfaction of those, for whose benefit it exists.

## III.—Jails.

21. In the Jails Department various reforms took definite shape during the year 1926-27, the most important being a great advance in the treatment of juvenile offenders. It is a universally accepted principle that young offenders should not be allowed to

come into contact with the ordinary jail population. The facilities for segregation have hitherto been altogether inadequate in Bengal, the only institution of a special kind being the Juvenile Jail at Alipore. In some cases, it was possible for magistrates to send boys under 15 years of age, convicted of offences punishable with transportation or imprisonment, to the Reformatory School at Hazaribagh in the province of Bihar and Orissa. Seats, however, were not always available in that institution, and on the 1st July, 1926, a reformatory school was opened in the Juvenile Jail at Alipore, under the Bengal Children Act of 1922, to deal with offenders between the ages of 12 and 16. For children under 12 years of age an industrial school was opened in the same jail in July, 1927, and both these institutions will soon be handed over to the Education Department. For adolescent offenders between the ages of 16 and 21 a Borstal School has been established in the Bankura Jail. These developments, which were long overdue, represent a great advance towards more enlightened methods of dealing with the youthful criminal, who is often more sinned against than sinning, and whose reclamation and reformation is surely one of the first duties of a civilised society.

22. Various disquieting irregularities in jail administration came to light in the course of the year, and the cruel murder of Rai Bhupendra Nath Chatterjee Bahadur, Superintendent of Police, Bengal Criminal Investigation Department, within the Alipore Central Jail, indicated that discipline and organisation were not what they should be. Government, therefore, appointed a Jails Inquiry Committee in January, 1927. The Committee submitted its report in April, and recommended many important changes, which are now receiving the careful consideration of Government.

23. Calcutta was selected as the meeting place of the third Annual Conference of Inspectors-General of Prisons, held in December, 1927. The provincial Jails Departments are fully alive to the widespread public interest in the question of jail administration, and these conferences may be expected to prepare the ground for further advances in enlightened methods of dealing with the criminal population.

## IV.—The Press.

24. The stirring events of the year afforded the provincial press almost inexhaustible opportunities for the display of its

peculiar characteristics. The despatch of troops to China, the formation of two Ministries, communal disturbances, and more particularly Ponabalia, the *Sivalingam* affair, "Mother India," and the appointment of the Simon Commission supplied an illimitable field for the exercise of journalistic ingenuity. There was no need for any newspaper to justify its existence or the patronage of its readers by the excellence or completeness of its news. The qualities that go to build up a reputation were quite unnecessary to secure a circulation. Unbounded excitement and unrestrained vituperation took the place of all those saner elements, that distinguish successful journalism, and provided adequate mental sustenance for a public, whose taste has been debased and degraded by many years of wild sensationalism. Government did not get even the proverbial "dog's chance." The disturbances in China were magnified into an attempt to throw off a galling foreign yoke, and the despatch of Indian troops to protect life and property in the Treaty ports was bitterly criticised. The Royal Commission on Agriculture, according to the *Mohammadi*, was a mere device to deprive India of the resources of her fertile lands. It was alleged that internees were kept in places "full of venomous snakes." The mania for the representation of all interests in any public body justified the demand that long-term prisoners should be nominated to the Jails Committee! Even a divisional conference of members of local authorities was suspected to cover a sinister scheme to secure control. When, however, the *Sivalingam* on the Calcutta Maidan was restored by the order of the Governor, *Forward* freely admitted that His Excellency's action would add to the prestige of the Government, but the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* could not refrain from expressing its deep disappointment that there was to be no enquiry into the conduct of the officers concerned, and no public demonstrations when the *Lingam* was restored, while another paper clamoured that some one should be punished for what had been frankly conceded to be a mistake. Apart from the *Sivalingam* incident, Government in the eyes of the Indian press could do nothing right, and throughout the year it had to face the ordeal of a "morning hate" from the editorial forces of almost all the papers of the metropolis. The compaign of unscrupulous misrepresentation has now gone to such lengths that it is difficult to justify further tolerance. It is true that if the whole vocabulary of abuse is expended on trifling incidents, the influence of the press in important matters will be correspondingly negligible. It is perhaps also the path of wisdom to let the discontented "work off steam." These arguments, however, can be pushed too far, and in Bengal many thoughtful observers have been forced to the conclusion that they are an inadequate answer to the untramelled liberty of abuse that

now prevails. The evil results of a campaign of persistent vilification on an ill-balanced community have already manifested themselves in ugly and ominous forms, and the reputation and prestige of the official classes and of Government have been seriously undermined by the unending repetition of falsehood. It is idle to hope that ultimately truth will prevail through its own inherent strength. Before that stage is reached, untold and irremediable mischief may be done, which alone justifies the contention that the existing state of things should be brought to an immediate end.

**Prosecutions.**

25. The immunity from press prosecutions, which marked the two preceding years, unfortunately did not continue in 1927. Intense communal and political feeling induced many editors to over-reach themselves, and six were prosecuted under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code. Under Section 153A of the Code 14 convictions were obtained, while Section 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code was also used with success. Further details are given in Part II of this Report.

**The European press.**

26. The European press maintained its enviable record of success. The serene confidence of its editorial columns kept it far above the sordid clamour of its rivals; its literary excellence suited the taste of the discerning section of the public; while the obvious efficiency of its management cannot but have reaped its due reward. There is no reason why the Indian press should not reach the same heights, if only it would realise that the daily exhaustion of its vocabulary and the monotony of its invective can attract, and indeed deserves, nothing more than the precarious support and fitful patronage of an ill-balanced public, which can appreciate nothing else.

**The law of libel.**

27. The curiously difficult position of the press in connection with the law of libel was illustrated in the case brought by Mr. S. C. Bose against the proprietors of the *Statesman*. Apparently the public utterances of a privileged person may be quoted in full, however libellous they may be, but on any attempt to draw obvious inferences, or to comment thereon a newspaper may be called upon to produce proof, which is in fact not available to the public, although there is full assurance that it exists, and widespread confidence in its truth. To the lay mind this anomalous position is incomprehensible.

**Communalism.**

28. As might be expected, the *piece de resistance*, of the journalistic feast throughout the year was again communalism. The exchange of abuse between Hindu and Moslem papers was violent in the extreme. No accusation was too low, no suggestion too mean if the object was to vilify the opposite party. Both

sides made frantic appeals to past history. Both made boastful references to past exploits, and both spoke in flamboyant language of what they would do in the near future. Solemn warnings and fierce threats were accompanied by impassioned appeals to their own supporters to be "up and doing" in the communal cause. "It is the duty of every Moslem to think of his communal position", said the *Asar-i-Jadid*, "and not to surrender his rights to the mercy or whims of the Hindus," and the *Sultan* capped the sentiment by repeating the proverb, "The more indulgence you show to a monkey the greater becomes his impertinence," while the *Raushan Hedayat* with the full assurance of faith thus addressed its readers:—

"You should always bear in mind that the sovereignty of the earth as well as of the heavens belongs to you alone."

And this from a press that resents what it calls British Imperialism!

29. The other side were not far, if at all, behind in the vigour of their denunciation. It is not surprising that the *Vote Ranga* should say, "The behaviour of the Mussalmans is gradually becoming intolerable", the reason for which the *Matwala* expressed as follows:—

"He (the Mussalman) considers his stubbornness to be his love of religion, stupidity to be devotion to God, and madness to be religion."

30. With reference to the suggestion of the Muhammadan community in Allahabad that no Hindu marriage procession should be taken out during the Mohurram, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* enquired whether "a section of our Muhammadan countrymen have taken entire leave of their senses of decency and commonsense". The fierce outburst in the Muhammadan press in the *Rangila Rasul* case was met defiantly, and a mufassal paper serenely declared, "The crescent of *Id* will naturally fade before the effulgence of the Vedanta, the perennial source of truth, and that day is about to come." On the whole, however, the Hindu press seemed to have a more vivid grasp than the other side, of the evils of communalism. It recognised that "for better or for worse the Hindus and the Muhammadans will have to work side by side for the good of their motherland," and not infrequently a genuine appeal is made to the Muhammadan "fire-eater" to consider the ultimate results of his fierce antagonism to his Hindu brother. But isolated appeals of this kind fell on deaf ears. The poisonous stream of communal hatred still flows fast and strong, and unless a speedy and effective stop is applied at the source, the future can be anticipated only with gloomy foreboding. The rising tide of

communal hatred surging from the press threatens to engulf the faint signs of unity that have appeared in recent years, and to destroy the foundations on which a few earnest builders have worked with so much care and patience. For this result the press, and the press alone, must be held responsible, in spite of an effrontery which sometimes seeks to shift the blame on to the shoulders of Government.

**Indian States.**

31. The Indian States came in for a fair amount of attention. While any interference on the part of Government is universally deprecated, there is curiously enough a strong under-current of resentment at the alleged misrule in Indian States. Absenteeism and extravagant expenditure in Europe are frequently mentioned, while it is not uncommon for a warning note to be struck that the Congress will not necessarily always adopt a policy of non-interference. The States are advised to adopt democratic forms of Government, and hints are sometimes thrown out that the whole of India, including the Indian States, must march together on the road of progress. On the whole, signs are not wanting that the Indian press is losing its former admiration for native rule. It suited the purposes of political propaganda in earlier years to pretend that the subjects of Indian States were much happier than the peoples of British India, but however much it may protest against the interference of the Government of India, the press generally seems to entertain an uneasy feeling that all is not well in some of these States, and that their existence is likely to be a stumbling block in the political development of India. Communalism, too, left its impress on this subject, the woes of Hindus in Muhammadan States being set up against the desperate plight of Muhammadans in Hindu States, with threatening demands that such things must cease. It is to be feared that unless it attains a higher standard of political enlightenment, the Indian press will be a source of grave and increasing embarrassment to those on whom will fall the duty of solving the perplexing problem of the place to be given to the Indian states in the constitutional development of India.

**Bolshevism.**

32. Bolshevism seemed to attract less attention than usual, and one leading paper admitted that "Bolshevic principles may not find a congenial breeding ground in India." There was nevertheless a tendency to exalt the "brotherhood" preached by the Soviet Government as an antidote to British imperialism, and the *Ananda Bazar Patrika* proclaimed that Russia had "delivered a new message to the world." The invitation to India to send representatives to the tenth anniversary of the Soviet Government was well received as coming from a country which "has ushered

in a new era in the world by carrying a new message of emancipation to the oppressed and downtrodden masses." This point of contract, however, between the Indian politician and the Soviet Government does not imply an acceptance of communistic principles on the Russian model, and the indifference of the press to the wild socialistic speeches of certain labour delegates from England is not without significance. On the other hand, it is perhaps not too much to say that the propertied classes in Bengal are not yet fully alive to the dangers that threaten their interests from this source, nor have they yet taken any substantial steps to introduce into popular journalism those more conservative and stable elements on which their continued prosperity must depend. In this direction probably lies the only hope of raising the press in Bengal from the abysmal depths to which it has sunk.

## V.—Finance.

33. In introducing the budget for 1926-27, the Hon'ble the Finance Member observed that although the current temporary remission came to an end in 1927-28, it could safely be assumed that the provincial contribution to the central Government would not be levied again. Hence, although the resources of the province are still limited and the financial position can never be fully assured until a settlement is vouchsafed to Bengal more in accord with the needs of the Province, the Hon'ble Member was nevertheless able to provide funds for an extension of existing activities and the development of new schemes. Fresh allotments were made involving an ultimate expenditure of Rs. 11,58,000 recurring and Rs. 66,36,000 non-recurring, the actual provision made in 1926-27 being Rs. 9,35,000 under the former and Rs. 43,17,000 under the latter head. In determining the amount of recurring expenditure due regard was paid to the difference between existing normal income and existing recurring charges after taking into account expenditure of a recurring nature, to which the local Government were committed or which was inevitable in the immediate future. Of the above figure of Rs. 11,58,000 for new recurring expenditure almost one-half was devoted to Education, and of the new items of non-recurring expenditure, Rs. 39 lakhs were for works to be executed by the Public Works Department, the remainder being distributed over other departments. **The Budget.**

34. The year was expected to open with a balance of Rs. 2,15,68,000, of which Rs. 10,70,000 appertained to the Famine Insurance Fund; the actual opening balance was however Rs. 2,38,26,000 (including Rs. 10,68,000 for Famine Insurance), **Actuals of revenue, expenditure and surplus.**

*i.e.*, better by Rs. 22,58,000. The revenue, excluding receipts outside the Revenue Account, was estimated at Rs. 10,77,70,000, and the estimated expenditure on Revenue Account alone was taken at Rs. 10,94,79,000. The actuals of receipts and expenditure however amounted to Rs. 10,50,36,000 and Rs. 10,70,95,000, respectively, leaving a net surplus of Rs. 2,17,67,000.

**Actual revenue.**

35. Against the total anticipated revenue of the Province of Rs. 10,77,70,000 the actual realisations amounted to Rs. 10,50,36,000, a shortage of Rs. 27,34,000. The chief factor in this deficit was the fall in "Stamps" of about Rs. 31,40,000 owing to general depression in trade, reduced prices of jute and possibly the reaction of the communal riots which took place during the year. Notable increases over anticipations were realised under the heads "Forests" and "Receipts in aid of Superannuation," each to the extent of about Rs. 4 lakhs owing to an increased demand for forest produce and under the latter head to larger recoveries from other Governments on account of the commuted value of pensions paid on their behalf. Other minor increases and decreases were spread over the remaining major heads; and of these may be mentioned a decrease of about Rs. 2 lakhs under each of the heads "Land Revenue," "Scheduled Taxes," "Interest on Provincial Loans and Advances" and "Industries," and a fall of about Rs. 3 lakhs under "Excise" due largely to the communal disturbances but partly to the depression in the coal trade and the high price of rice. The fall under "Industries" was due to a reduction in the sale price of quinine.

**Actual expenditure.**

36. The expenditure contemplated in 1926-27, exclusive of expenditure outside the Revenue Account, amounted to Rs. 10,94,79,000. A supplementary grant of Rs. 33,18,000 in the rains session of the Legislative Council, increased the total sum available for expenditure during the year to Rs. 11,27,97,000 In addition the budget of 1926-27 also provided for an expenditure of Rs. 28¾ lakhs outside the Revenue Accounts, *viz.*, repayment of loans to the Government of India (Rs. 5¼ lakhs), loans to local bodies, co-operative societies and cultivators (Rs. 6 lakhs), Calcutta Police buildings, (Rs. 9¾ lakhs), Damodar Canal Project (Rs. 4½ lakhs) and commutation of pensions (Rs. 3¼ lakhs).

37. Against the total grant of Rs. 11,27,97,000 the actual expenditure incurred amounted to Rs. 10,70,95,000, a saving of Rs. 57,02,000. The savings were due partly to the inability of the several departments to give full effect to schemes financed in the budget, or to spend the supplementary grants, partly to reduced expenditure under "Pay of Officers" and "Pay of Establishment" and partly to the inability of the Irrigation and Public Works

Departments to utilise their sanctioned allotments. Very large savings accrued under the heads "General Administration," "Administration of Justice," "Police," "Education" and "Medical," owing to the second cause, and savings under "Public Health" occurred mainly because the scheme for a district public health organisation for which Rs. 3,00,000 were provided, did not come to fruition. As charges for the sale of stamps vary with the receipts, the fall in the stamp revenue was reflected in a saving of about Rs. 60,000 in the expenditure under "Stamps." Other minor increases or decreases were due to conditions and circumstances which cannot be gauged accurately when the original estimates are prepared. They may, therefore, be regarded as normal fluctuations which do not call for special comment.

**Control of expenditure.**

38. Although there was no marked improvement in the working of the system of departmental control of expenditure against budget appropriations, its introduction has nevertheless helped to establish uniformity in the classification of expenditure by disbursing officers and the Accountant-General, an advance which should facilitate more accurate budgeting in future.

## VI.—Sea-borne Trade.

39. The most noticeable events of the year under review were (1) the passing of the Currency Act, (2) the coal strike in the United Kingdom, which assisted the export coal trade of Bengal but handicapped its general import business, and (3) the communal riots which created considerable confusion and disorganization in all the Calcutta markets. There was an increase of tonnage under nearly all the principal heads but the aggregate value of the sea-borne trade of the year (excluding treasure) fell to Rs. 259·39 crores from Rs. 276·86 crores in the year 1925-26, the decrease being due largely to an almost general fall in prices. The low price of raw cotton produced a considerable drop in the value of cotton piece-goods, which form one-third of the total foreign imports, and there was therefore a small shrinkage in their total value in spite of a large expansion in yardage. On the other hand the figures for sugar and metals were swollen by enhanced prices. Jute and jute manufactures, the most prominent item in the export trade of Bengal, decreased in value in spite of larger shipments. The value recorded for tea likewise did not wholly reflect the increased quantity exported. The total value of the foreign trade of the province decreased from Rs. 238·29 crores to Rs. 221·04 crores, exports declining by Rs. 18·55 crores and imports advancing by Rs. 1·30 crores. In the coasting trade the total fell by nearly Rs. 21 lakhs, imports declining by Rs. 71 lakhs, while exports improved by Rs. 50 lakhs.

Exchange.

40. Exchange was practically steady round about 1*s.* 6*d.* throughout the year. The highest figure touched was 1*s.* 6-1/10*d.* and the lowest 1*s.* 5¾*d.* The year closed with the rate at 1*s.* 5-29/32*d.* The passing of the Currency Act has relieved the trading community from the anxiety and uncertainty created by a capricious and fluctuating exchange, and the settled conditions now prevailing are an important factor in the restoration of commercial prosperity.

## VII.—Local Self-Government.

Municipalities.

41. The municipalities of the province continued their slow and spasmodic, but nevertheless interesting struggle towards better things. There were many backslidings, but from all of them it is hoped a lesson has been learnt, and some progress made in civic enlightenment. Although in many cases there was apparent stagnation, yet it is not possible to generalise, since in several of the towns the keenest interest was taken in municipal affairs. Unhappily, however, contested elections and animated meetings were not always due to a keen interest in public welfare, but rather to the eager pursuit of personal jealousies and party rivalries. On the other hand, the failure to hold or attend meetings is not always a proof of indifference, but may be due to the existence of conditions, which make municipal work almost futile. This is the case more particularly in small rural municipalities, where the scope for taxation is strictly limited. It is nevertheless difficult to account in all cases for the lack of interest. It is comprehensible in small places like Kotchandpur and Bhola, but not in progressive towns like Budge Budge and Basirhat which return more than one-third of their meetings as unsuccessful. Again, it is remarkable that large towns like Midnapore, Satkhira and Naraingunge month. These variations suggest that the explanation is to be should fail to hold a meeting of commissioners at least once a found in purely local conditions, and not in either the Municipal Act, or in the general level of public interest and civic consciousness.

42. A striking feature is that the percentage of ratepayers to total population is only 16·11. It falls to 3·2 in Titaghur, and is less than 1/10th of the population in places like Budge Budge and Naraingunge. The reason is found in the presence of a large coolie population living in lines, for which the employer or landlord pays the rates. There is, however, clear proof that many of the larger employers of labour in mill areas are keenly alive to the necessity of providing suitable conditions for their labour

force. They pay large sums in rates and taxes, and in many cases water-supply and drainage schemes owe their inception and completion to those firms, which permit members of their staff to serve on public bodies.

43. The average incidence of taxation per head of population is now Rs. 3-3-9. It falls to 6½ annas in Debatta and in 22 municipalities it is between eight annas and one rupee. In this low level of taxation is to be found the explanation of much that is depressing in municipal affairs. The town centres of the province have a long way to travel, and much to learn before they realise that payments for civic services are well spent, and that the return in public health and well being far outweigh the cost. There is unhappily little sign that the leaders of civic thought are taking any active part in this educational propaganda. Cases are rare in which there is any strong party actively engaged in the promotion of a scheme of extensive public welfare. More often do we find all support ranged solidly behind the forces of opposition to anything that will involve an increase of taxation, and before real progress can be made a change in this respect is essential. There is, however, no valid reason for pessimism. Education, the influence of the press, the example of a city like Calcutta, and local necessity will gradually bring to the front all those factors that build up civic consciousness and civic pride, but much patience will be required before the Department of Local Self-Government sees the fruit of its labours.

44. The depressing subject of collections and irregularities connected therewith again occupied a prominent place in the year's work. Here, again, we find proof that failure is not due to any defect in Municipal Law or to any inherent incapacity in the people to run a municipality.

In 22 municipalities realisations were either equal to or in excess of the current demand, and in six others they were over 99 per cent. Over all the percentage rose from 94:3 to 95:6 per cent. The low and unsatisfactory results in some places can, therefore, reasonably be attributed to local conditions, or to some unfortunate sequence of events, which has for the time being placed the control of municipal affairs in improper hands. This factor is the most likely explanation of errors in assessment and remission and weakness in dealing with recalcitrant ratepayers, or with fraudulent officials. These adverse features can, however, be eliminated, and continued effort on the part of Government to raise the standard of administration will undoubtedly bear fruit in due season.

45. There are distinct signs of an enlightened policy with regard to education. Expenditure rose from Rs. 3,81,000 to Rs. 4,46,000, and Midnapore, Comilla, and Madaripur went ahead with proposals for free primary education. On the other hand, Rangpur resolved to abolish the educational cess from 1st April, 1928, a retrograde step of which this town in future years will probably be ashamed.

46. Water-supply occupied a large share of attention during the year, and the province seems to have reached the stage at which no municipality can consider itself progressive or enlightened unless it has a pipe supply of filtered water. There are 29 municipalities with their own water-works, and seven in mill areas get their supply from the local factories. Tube wells have grown in public favour, and many municipalities are experimenting with them. Probably the time is not far distant when most of the important towns of the province will have a supply of pure water and the tank and *doba* will be a thing of the past, so far as domestic consumption is concerned.

47. Conservancy services improved but little. The sweeper problem remains as acute as ever, and in various places there was considerable trouble with the staff. No solution of this difficulty is yet in sight. The staff in many cases knows its power, and where control is slack and the method of work ineffective, public amenities must suffer. The only remedy for the present seems to be the institution of firm executive control, accompanied by a careful and tactful management of the sweeper staff. Due attention to the conditions under which they live, and the prompt payment of wages would help to this end. Such measures, however, do not reach the root of the difficulty, and it is not unlikely that this problem will be a source of increasing embarrassment in the future.

48. In connection with drainage, public health and public works, municipalities were hampered by lack of funds. Peter was robbed to pay Paul, and increased expenditure in one direction has only too often been met by a curtailment in another. There was an increased interest in the provision of free vaccination. Public resentment at the sale of adulterated foodstuffs found a reflection in increased zeal in the examination of foodstuffs offered for sale. In Dacca prosecution numbered 135, of which 75 ended in conviction. This is a most wholesome activity, which will probably increase in subsequent years.

49. On the whole the future may be anticipated if not with optimism, at least with hopefulness. The success achieved in various places in varied directions indicates that similar results

could be obtained elsewhere, and that no hasty generalisation can be made; more particularly as it is disproved that failure is due to any inherent incapacity to manage local affairs successfully. The faults that have been disclosed are remediable, and it may be hoped that in due time a sense of civic pride will develop, and in the process will be eliminated many of the evils of which too much may be made by an efficiency which runs too fast and too far ahead of the times.

District Boards.

50. In the second great branch of Local Self-Government the conditions that prevailed in many municipalities are more or less reproduced. Party faction casts its baleful influence over the proceedings of several Boards, more particularly in Midnapore and the 24-Parganas. Midnapore distinguished itself by electing a chairman of whom Government could not approve, and therefore the privilege of electing its own chairman had to be withdrawn. This, however, is an isolated instance due apparently to the intrusion of provincial politics into local affairs. The activities of Local Boards were as usual somewhat featureless, and the future of these bodies is still a matter of discussion. Opinion seems to be tending towards the view that as an intermediary between District Boards and Union Boards, Local Boards are not a success.

51. There were no striking changes with regard to finance. Income increases very slowly, as the sole source of additional funds is found in the revision of assessments, and not in the tapping of new sources of revenue. On the expenditure side there was the usual conflict between the various departments, which clamoured for an ever-increasing share of District Board allotments Fixity of revenue is unhappily accompanied by a system under which the various departments of Government continually and repeatedly demand that District Boards should spend an ever-increasing share of income on their own subjects. The new departments, which have taken up the more advanced aspects of social welfare, are insatiable in this respect. Public health calls for expenditure on prevention and cure. It wants trained nurses, baby clinics, and maternity centres. Wholesale inoculation for a variety of diseases and epidemics is expensive, and it is extremely difficult for District Board members to turn a deaf ear to demands, which obviously would promote public well being. The Veterinary Department and the Industries Department are equally anxious to see their own interests promoted, while the education staff maintains its insistent clamour for more and more money. In these circumstances it can easily be understood that one of the primary duties of the Boards, namely, the provision of satisfactory means of communication tends to be neglected. Relief, however, is being sought in the policy of entrusting water-supply to Union Boards.

It needs no argument to show that villagers themselves are really the only people interested in their water-supply, and there is no good reason why they should not pay for it. It is therefore now suggested that in the future expenditure under this head by District Boards should be strictly limited, and should take the form of judicious grants-in-aid calculated to stimulate local effort, without incurring the obligation to meet recurring charges for upkeep. With regard to communications it is difficult to see from what direction relief is to come. The growing popularity of motor transport has added immensely to the difficulties of the engineering staff, and it remains to be seen whether a provincial road board can be instituted deriving its income from motor taxation, and distributing the proceeds equitably among the District Boards of the province. Should this be possible, relief may be considerable, and the Boards will then be in a position to extend their activities substantially.

52. The actual work of the year was satisfactory. Many tube wells were sunk, more particularly in the 24-Parganas, and this district, as well as Mymensingh, has found it necessary to maintain a staff of expert mechanics and mistries to look after the wells. Hooghly District Board received a loan of Rs. 1,00,000 from Government for the improvement of rural water-supply, while Bakarganj spent Rs. 24,000 on the excavation of new tanks. The Public Health Department has issued a pamphlet in English and Bengali explaining the mechanism of a tube well, and the best method of keeping it in repair. These efforts to increase the supply of pure drinking water are likely to be maintained, and when once the average villager has realised the necessity of a pure water-supply, he will not rest content until a local source is available.

53. The growing interest in maternity and child welfare work is a gratifying development. In several places *dhai*-training centres have been opened and baby shows continue to arouse interest. In Rajshahi free vaccination on the group system was carried on from 1,500 depôts and 94,000 people were treated. These figures indicate an increasing public sense of the value of inoculation, and there is no reason to suppose that progress in this respect will be checked. The difficulty of inoculating *purdanashin* women, however, has still to be overcome. The only suggestion is the appointment of female vaccinators, and probably this will be a development of the near future.

**Union Boards.**

54. Union Boards continue not merely to hold their own but to entrench themselves more firmly as the first line of attack on welfare problems. The difficulty of finance has not yet been solved, but several Boards are maintaining free primary schools.

In Faridpur 26 such schools are to be found in the jurisdiction of four Boards. This is a hopeful development, and with judicious encouragement from the District Board further progress may reasonably be anticipated. The education of the rural population in the advantages of local self-government is steadily maintained by Circle and District Board officers. Opposition is gradually diminishing and some districts are now entirely organised into Union Board units. Probably the greatest impetus, however, towards village reconstruction will come from the Boards that work successfully, and concentration on the areas that have already made some progress should yield useful results. The general shyness in the matter of taxation is still a stumbling block to these small bodies, but hasty or severe criticism is misconceived. The innate suspicion of the average villager regarding new taxes is well founded. Only too often has he seen money misspent or squandered. Only too often has he heard of large or illicit gains by contractors, confirmed by his own observations, and he wants a greater assurance than he has at present that his money will be well spent before he parts with it. In short, before the villager can be asked to submit to taxation, the authorities that propose to tax him must establish their capacity to administer the proceeds to the public benefit. Therein lies the task before the local self-governing authorities and on its completion the villager will probably be found not so backward as he is generally supposed to be. Meantime the justifiable mistrust of years of experience is the bedrock of his philosophy.

## VIII.—Agriculture.

Work of the Agricultural Department —General.

55. Suitable weather at the beginning of the season favoured preparatory tillage and early sowing of autumn crops, but shortage of rainfall in April, May and June delayed completion of Kharif sowings in the West Bengal districts, retarded the growth and development of germinated crops and hindered sowing of seed beds and preparatory tillage for transplanted winter paddy. Heavy monsoon showers in July greatly helped transplanting operations and good progress was made, but excessive rainfall in August and consequent flood caused damage to autumn and winter paddy crops in some West and East Bengal districts. In North Bengal drought in late August delayed transplantation; but favourable rainfall in September and the early part of October again improved the situation and facilitated preparatory tillage for and sowings of spring crops. Subsequent drought till the third week of December followed by heavy rain at the end of

the month, and in January and February, was generally beneficial to late spring crops though damage was done to some early maturing crops. On the whole the season was a fair one for all crops.

**Royal Commission on Agriculture.**

56. The members of the Commission arrived in Bengal in November, 1926, and examined a number of both official and non-official witnesses. They visited a typical village in the 24-Parganas and inspected the Central Research Station at Dacca. To acquaint them with the activities of the Agricultural Department, an Exhibition was held at the Dacca Farm in December, 1926, in which other departments of Government and many commercial firms collaborated. The visit of the Commission aroused widespread interest and the endless variety of suggestions put before it by the public and the press afford adequate proof, if any were needed, of the important place of agriculture in the economic life of the province.

**Agricultural Education.**

57. The vexed question of agricultural education still remains in a fluid state. Government have approved in principle of an agricultural institute at Dacca, but the detailed regulations are still unsettled. The failure of the secondary agricultural school at Dacca to attract pupils is rather ominous, suggesting, as it does, that the value of agricultural education has not yet been realised, apart from the possibility of securing a Government appointment. Only ten students are attending the secondary school, and the vacancies are being utilised to put the departmental demonstrators through a " refresher " course.

58. The introduction of the Punjab system of agricultural teaching in middle English and high English schools has been sanctioned by Government, and a commencement made in the training of teachers from the 15th January, 1928. The system has already been tested in several schools in the Presidency, and the results already achieved justify its introduction on a larger scale. In three of the sericultural nurseries primary schools have been established for the sons of professional rearers. In addition to the " three R.'s " elementary instruction in improved sericulture is given. At one of these nurseries, a night school for adults has been established at their own request.

59. It is desirable to make it clear that the introduction of agriculture into the curricula of schools is not intended to convert them into factories for turning out finished farmers. The idea is rather to introduce a leavening of practical training into the present purely literary curriculum, to get over the almost universal objection of school boys to any form of manual work. It is hoped

to give the educational system a bias, as it were, towards agriculture, a change likely to meet with the approval of many guardians, who consider that the existing schools merely spoil their boys for a career, which was good enough for their parents, without providing an alternative outlet for their activities.

Research and experiment.

60. All the Research sections of the department were active, and valuable results continue to accrue. Conspicuous success was achieved in the preparation and use of artificial farm yard manure by the more complete utilization of weeds or other farm refuse, ammonium salts with bone, *Adco*, the Rothamstead preparation, and the new Nitrophosphatic compounds Ammophos and Diammophos which are now marketed in Calcutta. It is hoped, in this way, to secure a most necessary appreciable increase in the manure supply of Bengal.

Jute.

61. Varietal tests have once again confirmed the reputation of D. 154 as the heaviest yielder. An intra-varietal strain of D. 154 has been isolated, which is possibly even better. The spread of departmental jute races has been rapid, and they are now generally recognised as having definitely increased the producing capacity of the jute growing tract. A striking ocular demonstration is the almost complete displacement in about 5 years, of the old Red Tosha jute in Rajshahi by departmental Chinsurah Green.

62. Recently the Economic Botanist has devoted special attention to the selection of the *balam* paddies of Barisal and has succeeded in obtaining strains which are 15 per cent. better yielders than ordinary local varieties. These are now being multiplied for propagation. At Dacca, testing of selected strains from crosses between (*a*) early and late *aus* rices, (*b*) early and late *aman* rices, and (*c*) *aman* and *aus* rices have produced promising results in the shape of high yielding early maturing types of (*a*) *aus* paddy which will be much used in double cropped paddy tracts, (*b*) transplanted paddy which, it is hoped, will be of substantial value to West Bengal districts, where moisture conditions are often precarious. Other crops under investigation at Dacca, or at the departmental farms, are wheat, cotton, oilseeds and pulses. Encouraging results have also been obtained from work on fodder crops, both imported and local; and one of these, Japanese millet, (*Pennisetum typhordeum*), a quick-growing crop of the *bajra* type, has already attracted the notice of cultivators, from whom there is a demand for its seed. Given proper treatment in generous manuring and watering when necessary, guinea grass is capable of producing enormous supplies of green fodder throughout the year. Under favourable conditions, one

acre of guinea grass is probably capable of supporting 6 full grown cattle. Investigation into betel vine disease was continued, and, in collaboration with the Imperial Mycologist, a comprehensive test of preventive measures was carried out. The banana disease, reported from Nadia and Burdwan, also engaged the attention of the mycological section.

Preventive measures against mango weevil continue to be successful at Dacca. Calcium Cyanide dust was found very effective on rats, moles, crickets and whiteants.

At present there is no staff for a systematic soil survey, and the want of a Physical Chemist is seriously felt. Good general progress has been made with sugarcane and tobacco, there being largely extended cultivation of the departmental varieties. Some of the exotic varieties of tobacco give promise of success as a basis for cigar manufacture in Bengal.

**Propaganda.**

63. Public interest in agriculture and appreciation of the work of this department have created a demand for more District Agricultural Officers and Demonstrators. The Demonstration train organised by the Eastern Bengal Railway rendered excellent service and annual agricultural exhibitions at a number of centres, which the department encourages by exhibits and by subscriptions, are now a recognised feature of the cold weather, and are largely attended by cultivators who exhibit their own produce.

**Cattle-breeding.**

64. The appointment of the Live Stock Expert has enabled the department to adopt a definite breeding policy. Schemes for the improvement of cattle have already been approved by Government, and considerable development may be expected in the near future.

**Sericulture.**

65. With the addition of the small experimental nursery established at Bolpur (Birbhum), the total number of nurseries in the Province is 12 against 11 in the previous year. The policy of production of disease-free *Nistari* and *Chhotopolu* seeds for supply to the professional rearers was continued. Bad weather conditions somewhat affected the outturn of the crops. The incidence of *flâcherie* was high and the reasons are being investigated by the Sericultural staff. With the reclamation of inferior lands, the planting of more mulberry and more generous manuring, progress was made towards increasing the output of leaves and making the nurseries self-supporting. Experiments with E. C., a new disinfectant, gave satisfactory results, in that it was found to be as effective in preventing disease as the more expensive formalin.

66. Propagation of disease-free seeds through selected rearers, under departmental supervision, continued. Six such new seed farms were established during the year, making 31 in all. The quality of the seeds produced by the selected rearers was satisfactory. In view of the undoubted success of demonstration and propaganda in country villages, one additional Inspector and some more demonstrators were sanctioned during the year. These extended demonstrations are successfully teaching rearers to improve their methods and with it their outturn of silk. The improvement in the latter may be conservatively estimated at 30 per cent.

67. At the Sericultural School, Rajshahi, 3 students out of 10, and at Berhampore 3 out of 5, passed the final examination. During the year Government sanctioned an increased reward of Rs. 400 to each *ex*-student for the erection of model rearing houses. As recommended by the Bengal Silk Committee, the Rajshahi Sericultural School has been transferred to the Piasbari Central Nursery, where there are much better facilities for training.

**Irrigation.**

68. The problem of irrigation in Bengal has a two-fold aspect, namely, irrigation properly so-called, that is, the provision of an adequate water-supply to areas that are too high or too dry to carry a crop successfully, and secondly, the control of river courses and the drainage of spill water from low-lying areas, in which the crops are frequently completely destroyed. The disastrous floods of recent years, more particularly in the Burdwan Division, and the partial failure of crops in districts like Bankura, have attracted considerable public attention, and the Irrigation Department has received the strongest support in its attack on both aspects of the problem. The Damodar Canal, which will irrigate 200,000 acres of rice land in the Burdwan and Hooghly districts, is under construction, and the weir across the Damodar River has been commenced, the total estimated cost of the scheme being Rs. 78,00,000. In the Birbhum district work was started on a canal from the Bakreswar River to irrigate an area of about 10,000 acres at an estimated cost of Rs. 4,90,000. Another scheme connected with the Beria River in the same district was approved at a cost of Rs. 5,40,000, and the work will be taken up under the Bengal Irrigation Act, III of 1876, as soon as funds are available.

69. Work was continued on the schemes that were prepared after the floods of 1913 in the Midnapore district, and considerable progress was made. The Peechaboni scheme has been carried through and the Amirabad scheme is approaching completion, while preliminary arrangements were made to start work on the

construction of an escape at Sujanagar to consolidate the remedial measures in Ghatal subdivision. Much, however, remains to be done before the cultivator in the flooded areas of the Burdwan Division can have a real sense of security throughout the rains. Severe floods occurred again in August mainly owing to the flooding of the Subarnarekha River on the boundary between this Province, and Orissa. The Government of India have, therefore, appointed a committee to inquire into the causes of these floods and the possible means of preventing them. The services of Mr. Addams Williams, Chief Irrigation Engineer of Bengal, were lent to the Bihar and Orissa Government for the purposes of this inquiry, and it is hoped that a final and comprehensive solution of this problem will be forthcoming.

70. The interests of commerce continued to receive attention, and considerable progress was made in the improvement of internal navigation facilities. An estimate amounting to Rs. 3,10,000 for the construction of a lock and sluice at Jatrapur in the district of Khulna was administratively approved, and the work will probably be taken up in the near future. Fresh contracts were made with the joint river steamship companies for a period of three years, under which they will conduct bandalling operations at the head of the Daleswari River in the district of Dacca at a cost of Rs. 6,000 per annum to the Government of Bengal. A similar agreement at a cost of Rs. 21,000 per annum to Government has been made with the same companies for the conservancy of the river Ganges between Rajmahal and Goalando. The transport of jute from Eastern Bengal through the Madaripur Bhil Route Canal is of the utmost importance to Eastern Bengal, and an advisory committee representing various interests have been appointed to keep Government informed of the necessities of the situation. Locks and sluices to control the flow from the Lower Kumar River were under construction during the year, and it is hoped that these arrangements will afford a navigable fairway throughout the year for the immense traffic between Calcutta and the Eastern Bengal districts.

**Grand Trunk Canal.**

71. In connection with the Grand Trunk Canal a committee with Mr. A. Marr, the then Chairman of the Calcutta Improvement Trust, as president was appointed to examine the revenue aspects of the proposal. The committee, however, had held only two sittings when Government decided to drop the project, since the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the steamer companies had definitely reached the conclusion that the existing Sunderbans route could be maintained for steamer traffic for many years to come provided dredging be done on an adequate scale.

72. Miscellaneous work of great value to transport and traffic is illustrated by the remodelling of the Dum Dum Bridge, and the reconstruction of the Garia Bridge over the Tolly's Nullah. The Calcutta Improvement Trust has taken up the reconstruction of the Manicktollah and Belliaghatta Bridges over the Circular and Eastern Canals. The Amjore weir in Bankura district was reconstructed, and the Keshia Nala irrigation scheme was brought into operation. Work in connection with the flushing of the Gobra Nullah in the Murshidabad district was in progress during the year, and operations were commenced for the improvement of the Bhairab River in the Meherpur subdivision of the Nadia district at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,15,000. Minor activities of considerable interest included piling operations in the Goala Khal at Faridpur with the aid of a conveyer specially constructed by the Irrigation Department to remove water-hyacinth. The collection and burning of this pest from the Gangoor River between Rasulpur and Memari in the district of Burdwan was sanctioned at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,600. These experiments should add considerably to the experience of the Department in dealing with this curse of Bengal, and it is to be hoped that ultimately a satisfactory and reasonably economical method of dealing with water-hyacinth will be devised.

General agricultural conditions.

73. Weather conditions were not altogether favourable for agriculture. Insufficient rain in the early part of the year retarded transplantation of seedlings and heavy rain in July and August caused considerable damage to paddy crops in certain districts. The outturn of paddy, however, was on the whole, fair. The jute crop was generally good but it did not fetch as good prices as in the previous year. Almost all agricultural products commanded high prices to the great benefit of cultivators.

Landlords and tenants.

74. In the permanently settled area the relations between landlords and tenants were generally satisfactory. The most common causes of friction, where such existed, were enhancement of rent, exactions of *abwabs*, levy of interest on arrear rents and mismanagement of estates by the agents of absentee landlords. The prevailing communal tension has to some extent widened the gulf between Hindu landlords and Muhammadan tenants in the districts of Dacca and Pabna, where Muhammadan cultivators refused to cultivate the lands of Saha money-lenders on the *barga* system.

Illegal cesses.

75. The practice of levying *abwabs* or illegal cesses in addition to the legal rent is unfortunately still prevalent throughout the province, and tenants usually submit to such illegal demands

in order to avoid the displeasure of the landlords and their agents. The publication of the records-of-rights in various districts has had some effect in discouraging these illegal and harassing demands, and it is expected that they will gradually disappear as education spreads and the tenants learn the nature and extent of their own rights, and the legal methods of asserting them against oppressive landlords and their agents.

## IX.—The Co-operative movement.

**Progress.**

76. On the whole the season was fair, but economic conditions were not really satisfactory. There was a general shortage of money in Bengal districts, the demand for societies was very keen, and for the first time the Provincial Bank found it difficult to comply with applications for loans from different centres. The introduction of long-term and short-term loans mentioned last year enabled the department to complete negotiations with the Imperial Bank, which has not only agreed to grant cash credit advances to the Provincial Bank on the security of pro-notes of Central Banks but, on the security of the Provincial Bank, the local branches of the Imperial Bank have been authorised to grant advances to local Central Banks and selected Urban Banks. This arrangement has considerably increased the resources of the co-operative movement. There can be no doubt that a close association of the co-operative movement with commercial banks is possible and will benefit both agriculture and trade and commerce. The system of long-term and short-term loans is now much appreciated, and will not only ensure punctuality, but will also assist in keeping a major portion of the assets of societies in a fluid state.

**Long and short term loans.**

**Land Mortgage Banks.**

77. A scheme of Land Mortgage Banks is now under the consideration of the Registrar and has been referred to Central Banks for an expression of their opinion. That the formation of Mortgage Banks is really necessary can hardly be doubted. The tenancy laws will to a certain extent act as a stumbling block to the establishment of these banks on a large scale. Further progress will be slow without some financial backing from Government either in the shape of subscriptions to a portion of debentures issued to the public or by way of guarantee of interest on debentures. There is one Land Mortgage Bank in actual working in Naogaon in the district of Rajshahi. The conditions there are particularly favourable, and useful experience is being accumulated. Another Land Mortgage bank has been started towards the close of the year in Bhola in the district of Barisal. Its working is hampered by the difficulty of raising long-term loans.

The co-operative movement generally seems to be taking an ever deeper hold of the province, and the extension of its activities in the marketing and sale of produce is a gratifying feature. The new Land Mortgage Banks will require careful watching, as the problem bristles with difficulties, but the long experience behind the movement in Bengal justifies an attitude of confidence that undue risks will not be taken.

Sale and supply societies.

78. On the non-credit side the progress of the movement is satisfactory. There are now 78 sale societies. The most important of those started during the year are at Narayanganj, Akhoura, Chowmohani and Nakalia (Shahzadpur). Most of them have as their main objective the co-operative sale of jute. On the whole the experience gained during the year is satisfactory, although the financial results have not been particularly bright. It is very difficult to harmonize co-operative theory with the practices prevailing in the trade, but sufficient experience has been gained to make the co-operative societies hopeful of success. They have within a short time been able to establish their mark and the C. O. S. mark (co-operative societies' jute is so described) is now well known in the jute trade. The most notable event with regard to these societies is the establishment of the Bengal Wholesale Society, Limited, with which sale societies have now affiliated themselves. The wholesale society acts as the sole agent of the subsidiaries in the Calcutta market. The establishment of this society has to a large extent solved some of the difficult problems which confronted the sale societies last year. Although the movement is now too young for criticism, there is no reason why with perseverence and patience it should not achieve its objects.

The Bengal Wholesale Co-operative Society, Limited.

Industrial societies.

79. Owing to an unprecedented demand from all sides more attention was paid to the promotion of industrial co-operation than was possible in previous years. The Silk Union at Malda, to which a reference was made last year, has been registered. The success of the Calcutta Milk Union and its affiliated societies has created a demand for the establishment of similar unions and societies in every big district. Essentially these unions are producers' societies, although their value to the consumers is as great as their utility to the producers of milk. These societies in order to maintain the demand for their milk have to standardise the quality of their yield, and through the elimination of unnecessary profit they have been able to place milk on the market at a cheaper rate than their competitors. The marketing of milk and milk products on a co-operative basis has considerable scope in Bengal, and the experience of European countries shows that improvement of cattle has in every country been preceded by an improvement in the marketing of milk and milk products.

Milk Union.

Irrigation societies.

80. Co-operative irrigation societies are a special feature in the districts of Bankura and Birbhum, and towards the end of the year a demand arose for the formation of such societies in the districts of Malda, Burdwan and Midnapore. Their utility is easily understood and each successful society stimulates an eager desire in neighbourhood cultivators to provide themselves with similar facilities, on a co-operative basis. The irrigation movement has immense possibilities in the districts of Midnapore, Burdwan and Hooghly, where a beginning has already been made and an early extension of the movement to Malda is in contemplation.

Royal Commission on Agriculture.

81. The visit of the Royal Commission on Agriculture to Bengal created considerable interest in agricultural and co-operative matters. At the time of their visit there, the Dacca and some other Central Banks organised a Divisional Conference with the assistance of the Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society. Lord Linlithgow and some of the members of the Commission paid a visit to the Conference. An Agricultural exhibition was held by the Department of Agriculture at Dacca in which the Co-operative Department took part. Its stall was very attractive and models and pictures designed to visualise the progress of the movement were much appreciated by the public. In August, 1926, the Ranaghat Central Bank along with some other Central Banks and co-operative societies of the district of Nadia organised a co-operative conference of the Presidency Division. In August and December, 1926, there were similar Divisional Conferences in the Presidency and Rajshahi Divisions. These Conferences greatly stimulated interest in co-operation not only amongst members of co-operative societies, but also among those who are outside the movement, and the intelligent part taken in the proceedings by members of village societies was not the least satisfactory feature of these meetings.

Divisional Conferences.

The Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society.

82. The hopes expressed last year that the re-organisation of the Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society would lead to important developments have been amply fulfilled. Apart from the propaganda work it has undertaken in connection with various conferences, it has a useful record of activity in various directions. It has been able to improve its journals and the circulation of the Bengali issue is now about 9,000. The Central Paddy Depôt maintained by the Organisation Society with the help of the subvention from Government was able to assist paddy sale societies in the disposal of their produce. The paddy sale societies will very shortly be federated into a central society and in future the sale depôt will be managed by the Central Sale Society.

Transfer to sale Societies.

An interesting and perhaps somewhat curious development of the movement appears in the continued growth of societies with public or social aims as their main object. Sanitation and the prevention of disease are normally functions of local bodies and the existence of societies to promote these objects is surely a sad commentary on the defective organisation of the public health activities of Union and District Boards.

## X.—Industries.

83. With its headquarters staff at full strength and with the opening of the research laboratory in Calcutta the Industries Department was fully equipped to carry out the policy outlined by the Industrial Commission. It is to be feared, however, that the great change in industrial conditions since the date of the Commission's report has rendered the achievement of success on the lines anticipated by the Commission much more difficult than was at first thought. The Engineering Department was established in the hope that its services would be utilised by small and struggling industrialists, who were unable to pay for expert technical advice. As a matter of fact, contact with the industrialists of the province is still very slight, and the engineer continued to devote most of his time to the perfection of various labour-saving devices for home industries. These included machines for cutting conch shells, for polishing brass and bell metal, and for bending and marking ornamental signs on umbrella handles. Successful demonstrations of these machines were given at various places, and efforts are now being made to effect similar improvements in other home industries, which flourished in earlier years in the province.

84. On the research side the Industrial Chemist has undertaken a number of investigations relating to the better utilisation of raw materials available in Bengal. His improved process for the purification of shellac was demonstrated in Malda, and his experiments on match head compositions were concluded. It is obvious that in work of this kind early and speedy results are not to be expected. But the ultimate value of continued research is undoubted, and the development of the programme of work will be watched with interest by all industrialists.

85. The Bengal Tanning Institute has been established on a permanent basis. Detailed research has been continued into many difficult and interesting problems connected with local leather and its tanning, the results being published in quarterly bulletins, which are distributed to the trade. On the educational side

instruction is given to a number of apprentices, who are put through a regular course. Many of the students belong to the *bhadralog* class, and some have already successfully entered the leather trade. With regard to mufassal *chamars*, the practice of sending out demonstration parties was continued, and many have received instruction in modern methods. The value of the export trade in hides and skins through Calcutta is immense, and there is no reason why local tanners should not have a bigger share in the industrial side of the business. The Institute has continued its valuable work in turning out a number of trained tanners, who should in due course be able to play a worthy part in the development of the industry throughout the province.

86. It has long been admitted that the old buildings of the Weaving Institute at Serampore were quite unsuited for modern conditions, and Government have given administrative approval to a scheme for the erection of new buildings on modern lines equipped with up-to-date machinery. It is to be hoped that the better training made possible thereby will enable the staff to turn out more highly qualified men, for whom there is undoubtedly a demand in the extensive weaving business of the province. An interesting development is the establishment of classes for women, some of whom on the completion of their training, will be employed in the formation of female peripatetic demonstration parties for the training of *purdanashin* women at their own homes.

87. Considerable progress was made with the equipment of the Silk Weaving and Dyeing Institute at Berhampore. The power plant and the boiler have been installed, and the machinery has been supplied. The school has recently been opened, and it is gratifying to know that a large number of candidates for admission came forward. The Agricultural Department is vigorously developing the art of sericulture, and the new institute completes the organisation of a self-contained silk industry in Bengal.

88. In Calcutta the old evening school was absorbed by a new technical school in Corporation Street. The building, which with its site cost over Rs. 10,00,000, is worthy of Calcutta, and a strong staff was recruited. A good start was made, and with the development of the apprenticeship system this school has a useful future before it.

89. With the opening of the Indian School of Mines at Dhanbad in November, 1926, the mining classes of the Bengal Engineering College became superfluous. It was, therefore, decided to close them down, and to grant four scholarships to Bengalee students at the new school. This institution provides courses in the highest form of mining engineering, and there is no reason why students, who complete the course successfully

should not secure responsible employment in the great mining industry. It is to be hoped that students from this Province will take full advantage of this new and attractive opportunity; for in spite of depression, coal must be extracted, and the industry will always require the services of trained mining engineers.

90. With regard to technical and weaving education the department pursued a forward policy. The necessities of the Province in this direction are universally recognised, and Government have signified their realisation of the position by granting a fixed increase of Rs. 30,000 per annum for three years to the grant-in-aid allotment. The department is thus in a position to prepare schemes in full confidence that funds will be forthcoming and firm agreements can be made with such local bodies as may undertake to share in the cost. The results of this policy will be watched with great interest.

91. It has been realised, however, that without some means of closer contact with village and small industries, the department is unable to make headway in what ought to be the main branch of its activities, that is, the rendering of assistances to small struggling industrialists. The difficulties of the situation have not yet been solved, but the fact that they have been realised gives ground for optimism that further developments will follow, so that the department may ultimately justify the somewhat rosy expectations that were entertained when it was launched.

Labour unrest.

92. The number of industrial disputes involving stoppages of work was 58 as against 40 last year. The total number of workmen who " downed tools " was approximately 133,953, as against 61,279 in the year 1925-26; and the aggregate economic loss in working days was about 1,283,153 compared with 614,221. Jute mills and presses accounted for about 53 per cent. of the total number of disputes and the remaining 47 per cent. were distributed over various other industries. Of the 58 disputes of the year, 32 were occasioned by demands for higher wages or by other questions affecting wages and their payment, 2 arose on issues relating to bonus, 5 on questions respecting discharge, dismissal or disciplinary action against employees, 9 on details of leave and hours of work, and the rest on other miscellaneous issues. The recently introduced change in the system of shifts in jute mills was responsible for about 33 per cent of the disputes recorded in this group. In these cases, there was always a demand either for a reversion to the old system or for an increase in the rates of wages. The disputes were due mainly to misunderstanding, as the new system in some cases led to increased wages on the old rates. Only 8 of the reported disputes were settled in

favour of the employees, and 41 against them, while in 9 cases work was resumed either as the result of a compromise or pending negotiations.

**Trade Union movement.**

93. The one noticeable feature of the Trade Union movement was a lack of cohesion among Trade Union organisations, manifesting itself in internecine quarrels and splits. The Bengal Trade Unions Federation, which also claims to be the Provincial Committee of the All-India Trade Union Congress, was for some time torn asunder by party quarrels. An opposition party in the Indian Seamen's Union set up a separate organisation under the title of the " National Seamen's Union of India, Burma, Ceylon and Malaya." Towards the close of the year signs of disaffection towards the central organisation were also visible in the Garden Reach Branch of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union, and a movement was gaining strength for the establishment of a separate independent body, mainly comprising railway labour at the Bengal-Nagpur Railway yard at Garden Reach, Calcutta. The only notable event of the year was the holding at Calcutta of the inaugural session of the All-India Press Employees' Conference under the auspices of the Press Employees' Association, Calcutta. The conference, it is said, will be held annually in future.

94. A new conciliation panel was constituted by Government with effect from the 20th April, 1926, to deal with disputes in public utility services in Calcutta.

**Jute gambling.**

95. In May, 1926, the London Jute Association submitted a memorial to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India representing the pernicious effects on the legitimate jute trade of the operations of the Calcutta " Bhitar Bazar," an organisation which, though originally established as a " futures " market, had degenerated into a mere gambling arena. The Association suggested that the " Bhitar Bazar " should be abolished, that in its place a properly constituted, well-controlled and representative organisation for dealing in " futures " should be created on the lines of the Bombay Cotton market, and that legislation should be undertaken for the purpose. The " Bhitar Bazar " had, however, already ceased to exist in consequence of the conviction in the Calcutta Police Court of certain of its members who were prosecuted in February, 1926, for gambling. The convictions were subsequently upheld in appeal by the Calcutta High Court, and it was thus established that gambling of a similar nature could be suppressed under the existing law. No further legislation was therefore necessary. Various proposals, however, have reached Government from time to time for legislation to prevent uncontrolled speculation and gambling in the

various exchanges or associations in Calcutta known as *baras* established ostensibly for dealing in " futures " in various commodities, and in 1926 a bill (modelled on the Bombay Cotton Contract Act, 1922) to provide for the suppression of wagering associations was introduced by Mr. Debi Prosad Khaitan, a non-official member of the Bengal Legislative Council. From the views expressed by various commercial bodies on Mr. Khaitan's Bill and on the proposals of the London Jute Association, it appeared that there was a sharp division of opinion among the mercantile community on the desirability of establishing a " futures " market for jute and other commodities. Government did not, therefore, consider that any action on their part was necessary and for the present, the commercial community must evolve such regulations or establish such conventions as appear to it suitable for the control of transactions of this character.

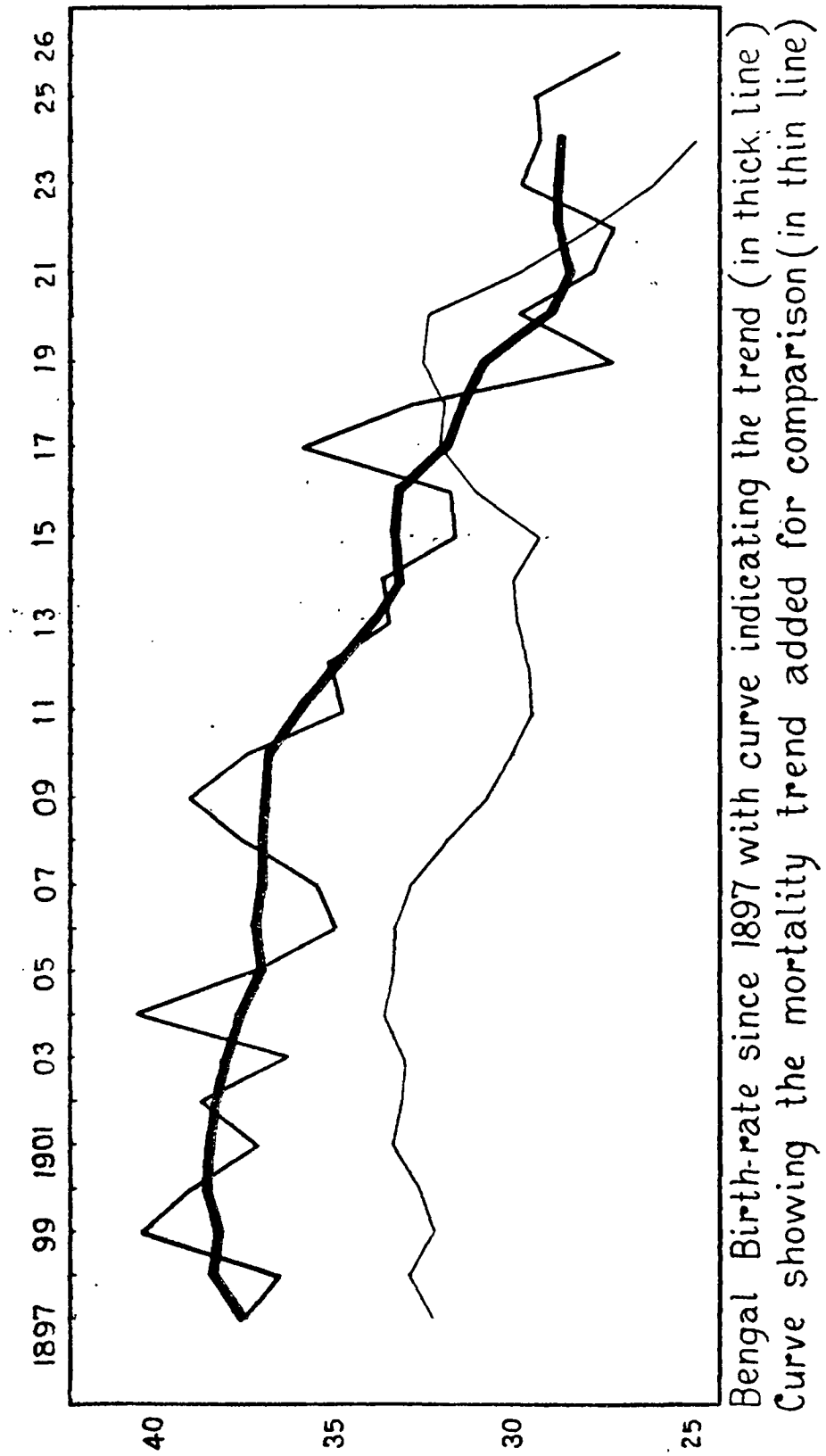
## XI.—Public Health.

Vital statistics.

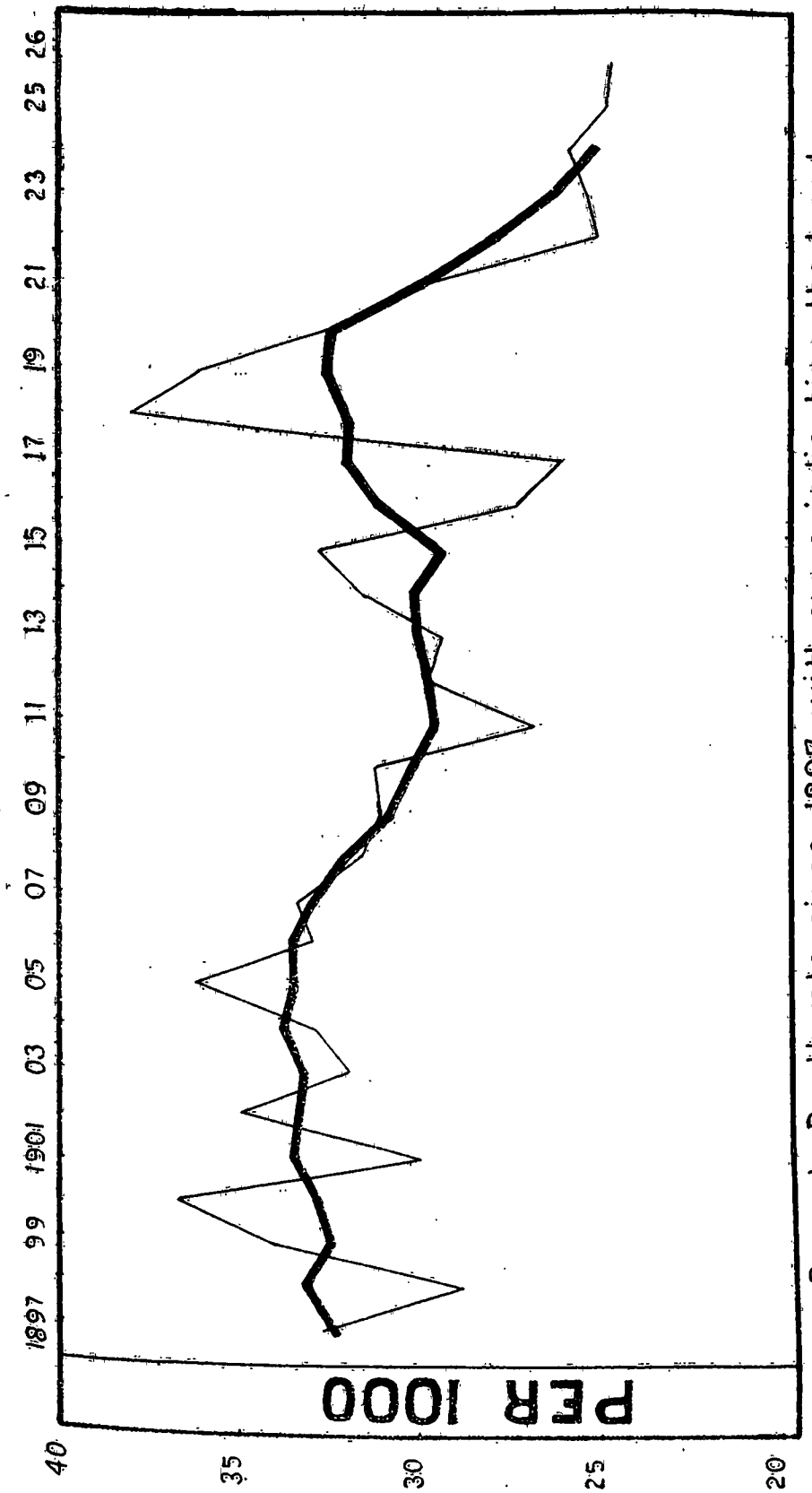
96. The most striking feature of the vital statistics of the Province is the steady downward trend of the birth-rate accompanied by a death-rate, which fluctuates considerably, but does not yet show definite signs of a permanent fall to a lower level of mortality. Sixteen districts returned a lower birth-rate, as compared with the decennial mean, and in the aggregate, the rural rate exceeded the urban rate by 51·9 per cent. The provincial death-rate was slightly less than that of the preceding year, and 6·1 per cent. less than the quinquennial average, but no decided downward trend is yet apparent. This may well be understood when it is realised that in 1926 the death-rate from cholera was practically doubled. A disturbing factor of this kind is adequate proof, if any were needed, that control over epidemic disease is an essential preliminary to an improvement in the mortality curve. There was again a repetition of the curious fact that the ratio of deaths among Mussalmans was higher than that of Hindus in the Burdwan, Presidency and Rajshahi Divisions, and lower in Dacca and Chittagong.

Collection of vital statistics.

97. The figures compiled by the Public Health Department afford clear proof of the imperfect method of collecting vital statistics. For example, the maternal death-rate in rural areas is much less than it should be on the basis of the Calcutta figures, which are naturally more accurate. Chandrakóna returned a death-rate of 40·3 per mille, while Comilla returned the figure 6·0, Barrackpur 9·0, Bogra 9·3, and Pabna 9·8 against an




Bengal Birth-rate since 1897 with curve indicating the trend (in thick line)
Curve showing the mortality trend added for comparison (in thin line)




Bengal Death-rate since 1897 with curve indicating the trend.

aggregate urban average of 21·4 per mille. Then again, the striking seasonal variations, which show that both births and deaths are much fewer in July, August and September every year, are probably due to climatic and physical causes rather than to defective reporting, as might at first sight seem possible. Unfortunately, little is being done to improve reporting. In the Burdwan, Presidency and Rajshahi Divisions no omissions were detected in three, two and six districts, respectively; in Midnapur, Murshidabad and Khulna, no verification was even attempted. In urban areas conditions are little better, although in a number of municipalities rewards are given for information of unreported cases. It is possible that with the development of Union Boards the collection of vital statistics will be facilitated, but the accurate diagnosis of disease in death cases must await the growth of a mufassal medical profession.

**Cholera.**

98. The year was marked by a virulent outbreak of cholera, and the total deaths recorded were 59,000 against 34,000 in 1925. The rate was higher in every month of the year with the exception of November, and the death-rate was higher in every Division except Chittagong. In the Howrah district the epidemic raged furiously towards the latter part of the year, but was finally brought under control. In Bankura village after village was affected along the banks of the flooded rivers Joypanda and Kansai. In Contai the death-rate was 6·17 per mille, the disease apparently being brought by pilgrims travelling to and from the Sagar *mela*. In Rajshahi in the five months January to April and again in December 951 deaths occurred out of a total of 1,200 deaths from this cause during the whole year. In Bogra an epidemic was traced to a cholera-infected village on the banks of the Bangali River in the Rangpur district, the disease being entirely river-borne. These outbreaks afford some indication of the varied conditions under which cholera is to be fought. Inoculation was increasingly popular, and the amount of vaccine supplied was nearly five times the quantity issued in 1925. This preventive measure was extended to all the districts of the Province except Darjeeling, and the success of the treatment has been universally admitted, and indeed has captured the imagination of the public in a very striking manner. The District Health Officer of Rangpur states that " the introduction of anti-cholera inoculation has totally changed the outlook of combating the disease, and it is confidently expected..... the disease will be finally eradicated." The attack on sources of infection was at the same time maintained, and the Public Health Department disinfected 17,200 wells and 9,588 tanks. The additional staff, which was deputed by Government to help local bodies in the campaign, included 100 Sanitary Inspectors and 25 Sub-Assistant

Surgeons. The Publicity Branch of the Department distributed posters and by means of lectures and lantern demonstrations endeavoured to educate the public in the latest preventive and curative methods. It is doubtful whether the public realise the great enthusiasm, with which the department has tackled this problem, but in course of time continued propaganda will undoubtedly bring home to the province the inestimable benefit that has been conferred on it by scientific methods of dealing with this scourge.

Small-pox.

99. The epidemic which started towards the end of 1924 continued unabated throughout 1926, and the reported number of deaths rose from 17,000 last year to 25,000, while the percentage of deaths from this cause to total mortality increased from 1·5 to 2·2 per cent. The extensive prevalence of the disease in rural areas is shown by the fact that it affected 7,000 out of 84,000 villages against 3,600 in the preceding year. The statistics afford a further proof of the theory that small-pox recurs with special virulence, after an interval of some five or six years. The first epidemic started in November, 1914, reached its climax in March, 1915, and subsided about August, 1915. The second epidemic commenced in November, 1918, attained its first maximum in May, 1919, and its second in March, 1920. The present outbreak started in November, 1924, reached its first peak in March, 1925, and after a decline again rose to a second peak in May, 1926. In all these outbreaks the rise started about October or November. The greatest mortality occurred between March and May, and the disease subsided from July to September. It cannot be doubted that the continued collection of statistics will ultimately enable the Public Health Department to anticipate these periodic outbreaks, and if preventive measures be taken in time, control over this disease will gradually be established. A striking feature has been the undue number of deaths in infants and children below ten years of age, these being 29·2 per cent. of the total against 25·28 per cent. in the previous year. This unhappy state of affairs seems to indicate that more attention should be paid to primary vaccination, which is the only effective measure known to science to suppress small-pox. There is a universal complaint from District Health Officers of the absence of compulsory legislation to enforce re-vaccination during an epidemic, while the delay in getting information of outbreaks is still a serious handicap. The opposition to vaccination on the part of females is another source of difficulty. In Murshidabad, an experiment was made in the employment of female vaccinators. They visited 147 villages, and delivered 209 lectures to ladies and 107 to local *dais*. They performed 281

primary and 1,492 re-vaccinations among women. The development of this branch of activity is an immediate necessity, as otherwise it is practically impossible to stamp out small-pox amongst the female half of the population.

**Fever.**

100. The total number of deaths reported from fever in 1926 was 822,000 against 874,000 in 1925. The rate per mille fell from 18·8 to 17·7, and the percentage of fever deaths to total mortality from 75·5 to 71·5. The decrease occurred under all classes of fever except measles. Twelve districts showed an improvement and thirteen a retrogression as compared with the previous decennium. In towns the fall in the death-rate was 4·6 per cent., and in rural areas 6·1 per cent. It is rather striking that the rate in rural areas is about three times as high as in towns. Malaria as usual accounted for most of the deaths under this head, there being 458,000 cases reported against 497,000 last year. The reduction is 8·4 per cent., indicating that the trend for malaria mortality still continues on the decline. Rajshahi returned the highest death-rate, and Bakarganj the lowest from this cause. From 13 towns no deaths from malaria were reported at all, and only six returned a death-rate above 10 per mille.

101. The campaign against malaria took the form as before of extensive and widespread distribution of quinine, but there was a fall in the quantity consumed from 10,000 lbs. to 8,300 lbs. These figures reflect the reduction in the incidence of malaria. Work was continued on the experimental anti-malaria schemes in the Banka Valley, at Singaran, Toposi, Jangipur, and Meenglas. In the first two work was carried out satisfactorily, but in Jangipur, where the scheme was handed over to the Municipality, it was discovered that flushing had not been carried out according to plan. The Sub-Assistant Surgeon, who was on special duty there, had therefore to be withdrawn, and it is to be feared that the results will be vitiated through this breakdown. A noteworthy incident was the visit of Sir Ronald Ross to the Meenglas Scheme in January, 1926.

102. A number of anti-malaria societies continued to operate and a few additional were organised. Twelve were registered in Howrah, and 24 in Hooghly. In Khulna village health societies increased from 22 to 100. In Faridpur 11 out of 30 working societies were registered, and in Noakhali 19 were organised and registered. In other places considerable activity was shown, and it is not unlikely that the future will see a large increase in the number of these organisations throughout the province. Generally, they undertake minor anti-malaria operations such as clearing jungle, cleansing tanks, kerosening stagnant water, and

educating the public by means of lectures and lantern demonstrations. In some cases they assist in clearing insanitary drains, and in distributing quinine. In these activities they usually co-operate with the staff of the District Boards. Many of the latter appointed epidemic doctors, and opened centres for the treatment of malaria patients, and generally it may be said that public interest in the necessity of combating malaria has been aroused, and is likely to continue.

**Kala-azar.**

103. The mortality from kala-azar showed a decrease all round, the reduction in the provincial rate being 13·9 per cent. The campaign by District Boards against this disease still continues, and the district reports show that the number of centres for treatment is steadily increasing. In Rangpur the District Health Officer states that, though the attendance of kala-azar patients is on the increase, the prevalence and severity of the disease itself is diminishing, probably because the public have now learnt that it is amenable to treatment, and avail themselves in larger numbers of the services of the District Board staff. In Bogra the attendance at the different kala-azar centres is steadily falling as the result of a decided decline in the disease, and the District Health Officer confidently expects that in a few years kala-azar will almost die out. On the other hand, the disease seems to be increasing in Murshidabad, and in many districts it has been necessary to open new centres for treatment. The statistics regarding this disease are still vague and indefinite, but making every allowance for defective diagnosis and reporting, it appears that the incidence of kala-azar is on the decline.

**General.**

104. There was a further extension of school hygiene work during the year, while child welfare continued to attract increasing attention. The public health laboratories at Calcutta and Dacca and the municipal laboratory in Darjeeling examined over 12,000 samples with results that afford ample ground for uneasiness regarding the food supply of the province. For example, 58·6 per cent. of samples of milk from municipalities were found to be adulterated; 43·2 per cent. of samples of mustard oil; 40 per cent. of samples of ghee, and 31 per cent. of samples of flour. These figures are not likely to improve until a drastic and comprehensive Pure Foods and Drugs Act is passed by the Legislature.

## XII.—Education.

**General.**

105. After the election of the new Council the administration of the department was re-transferred in January 1927 and several Ministers held charge in turn. At the commencement Sir Abd-ur-Rahim was in office for a very short time. Then Mr. B.

Chakravarti held charge up to August, and after his resignation the department was controlled by a Member in Council till about the middle of October, when the present Minister assumed office. In such unsettled conditions nothing in the nature of a constructive policy was possible and no large or important legislative development was found practicable. Notwithstanding these difficulties, the local Government have found it possible to frame a new Bill to provide for the extension of free and compulsory primary education. This was published in the *Gazette* for public criticism. The other measures of improvement which were possible were narrow in scope and such as could be carried through without financial outlay of any magnitude.

**Universities.**

106. Calcutta University continued its work along its own characteristic lines. Sir William Ewart Greaves relinquished the Vice-Chancellorship on the 8th August, 1926. In recognition of his services, the University, at a special convocation on the 29th July, 1926, conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Law. Upon the retirement of Sir Ewart Greaves, Professor Jadunath Sarkar became Vice-Chancellor. Professor Sarkar has a brilliant record and there are unmistakable signs that the University will benefit richly by his devotion to duty, administrative experience and erudition. An agreement has been arrived at between Government and the University on the revision of the Matriculation regulations by which the vernacular will be made a medium of instruction and examination in high schools. The vexed question of the constitution and functions of the proposed Board of Secondary Education, however, still remained unsolved. The Islamia College, Calcutta, opened its doors to students in July, 1926.

107. During the year under review the third storey of the new building on the Fish Market site was completed, the local Government making a contribution of Rs. 1,95,000 towards the cost. Most of the post-graduate classes are now housed in this building, which has been called The Ashutosh Building after the illustrious Vice-Chancellor, Sir Asutosh Mukherjee, whose memory has further been honoured by the Senate in the creation of two chairs for an Ashutosh Professorship of Sanskrit and an Ashutosh Professorship of Islamic culture.

108. Dacca University continued to progress steadily along the lines previously laid down, the most noteworthy feature being the steady rise in the number of Moslem students. Now that funds are being allotted to erect a suitable building for the Moslem Hall, these students will have every chance of getting the best out of the educational facilities offered to them.

Secondary education.

109. The unsatisfactory condition of secondary education mentioned in last year's report continued without any fundamental change. Owing, however, to the enforcement for a second year of a reasonable standard in the Matriculation Examination, the public are more aware of the true state of things and efforts are being made in many schools to improve matters. Unfortunately in the year under report Government were unable to provide increased grants for this branch of education. Until new sources of revenue are available these schools must continue to look to the public for their support. The question of control is still undecided, but the report of the University Senate and the examination of the results of the past five years' working of the Dacca Intermediate and Secondary Board were useful contributions to the solution of this difficult problem. Considerable progress was made in the preparation of the scheme to inaugurate teachers' provident funds in secondary schools, an annual provision of half a lakh being made for this purpose. Since the close of the financial year the rules of the fund have been completed and published, and if the scheme prove successful it is hoped that further funds will be available.

Primary education.

110. The situation has changed little during the year, the only new feature being the allotment of an additional two lakhs per annum to supplement the pay of trained teachers in primary schools and maktabs. Even with this sum little can be done to improve the lot of so many poorly paid men. The Government proposals mentioned last year have now crystallised into the Bengal (Rural) Primary Education Bill which has received the sanction of the Government of India.

Muhammadan education.

111. While the actual percentage of Muhammadans at the primary stage of education, namely 51·4, may at first sight appear satisfactory, progress nevertheless is more apparent than real, as the great proportion of the children are concentrated in classes I and II and get no further. This figure may be contrasted with the percentages in high and middle schools, 15·5 and 19·3, respectively—figures which reveal the true position of the Muhammadan community. Owing partly to the apathy of parents, partly to the scattered nature of the population, and its remoteness from high schools and partly to the strong preference which still exists for institutions like maktabs and madrassahs, little progress has been made towards higher education and in the secondary and collegiate grades the community is far behind. This fault does not lie in lack of facilities. The Calcutta Islamia College was established during the year under report and reserved for Moslems; places have also been reserved for them in some of the Arts and Professional

Colleges, and in Government and aided high schools. Some institutions are reserved entirely for Muhammadans and scholarships, stipends, free-studentships are bestowed on them liberally. But progress remains slow, and the gap between the aspirations of the community and its educational fitness to realise them remains one of the heart-breaking problems of the Province.

**Education of Indian girls and women.**

112. The opening of a new high school at Krishnagar and the prospect of changing the Coronation Girls' School at Khulna into a high school are symptoms of the growing demand for the higher education of girls. Attention is being given in a larger measure to health and hygiene and a course in hygiene, first aid and home nursing has been added to the syllabus. It is gratifying also to notice the gradual spread of the Girl Guide Movement and the increasing popularity of classes in drill. The most significant event of the year, however, was the first conference of the Bengal Women's Education League in February 1927, when women interested in education as teachers or organisers met and discussed the various problems of women's education in the province. It is hoped that the conference will be an annual feature so that attention may remain focussed on the many important problems that confront the members of the League.

**Controlling and Inspecting Agency.**

113. The educational administration of the Province was controlled by the Director, assisted by an Assistant Director and an Assistant Director for Muhammadan Education. This staff was strengthened in 1926 by the appointment of an additional Assistant Director on a temporary basis. As a result of this additional temporary appointment, the Director has been able to devote some time to necessary touring work and thus to keep himself in touch with the various institutions under his control.

Last year's review gave a glimpse of the future of the Indian Educatonal Service as a result of the acceptance of the recommendations of the Lee Commission. The Secretary of State has now finally decided that the posts at present included in the all-India Services operating in the transferred field of administration should be provincialised, and the local Government are formulating their proposal for the constitution of new educational services on a provincial basis in place of the existing all-India Service, which will thus pass into history with a record of achievement of which it may well be proud.

**Miscellaneous.**

114. Increasing attention was given throughout the year to physical culture in schools and colleges in Bengal. In pursuance of a Resolution moved by Mr. A. C. Banerjea in the Bengal Legislative Council a comprehensive scheme has been drawn up for the introduction of compulsory physical culture for boys in all schools

—high, middle and primary—and in madrassahs, and maktabs. It is hoped to put it into force as soon as the necessary funds are voted by the Council. The Boy Scout Movement continues to develop steadily. Funds have been provided to start this training in selected high and primary schools, and facilities are being accorded to Government teachers to attend the Scout Masters' Training Camp.

## XIII.—Legislative Council.

**New Council**

115. The third Council under the Reforms met for the first time on the 10th of January, 1927, and under the presidentship of a nominated Chairman, Mr. K. C. De, C.I.E., I.C.S., members were sworn in. The address of His Excellency Lord Lytton to the new Council on the 11th of January, 1927, has already been mentioned. A favourable atmosphere seemed to prevail in the Council chamber, and on the 11th a member of the Liberal Party, Raja Manmatha Nath Ray Chaudhuri of Santosh, was elected President of the Council by 77 votes to 50. He took his seat the same afternoon. On the 17th January, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Emaduddin Ahmed was elected Deputy President by 69 votes to 59. On the approval of his election by His Excellency the Governor, the Deputy President took his seat on the 21st February, 1927.

**The Governor and the Council.**

116. In his farewell address on the 26th of March His Excellency Lord Lytton gave a thoughtful exposition of the merits and defects of the existing constitution, and few will disagree with His Excellency's opinion that the existence of an Executive, which cannot be removed by the Legislature, and of a Legislature, which cannot be removed by the Executive is not calculated to produce harmony between the two, and without harmony between the Legislature and the Executive, efficient Government is impossible. This important and suggestive speech is printed in Appendix I.

117. His Excellency Sir Francis Stanley Jackson addressed the Council on the 23rd August, 1927. The speech, which is also printed in full in Appendix II contained an important declaration of His Excellency's policy with regard to the application of Regulation III and the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act.

**Ministry.**

118. Relationships between the Council and the Ministry have already been described. It is sufficient here to say that the system set up by the Reforms was in actual operation throughout the year. Ministerial responsibility was enforced in a constitutional manner, and the year closed with a Ministry still in office.

**Budget.**

119. The annual budget for 1927-28 was presented to the Council on the 21st February, 1927. Criticism was as usual keen and vigorous, but the Council acted with moderation in reducing grants. A token cut of Re. 1 was made in the Land Revenue budget as an expression of disapproval for the failure to introduce the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Bill. Two other cuts, however, reflect little credit on the Council. The demand for Rs. 3,000 under the "Staff and Household for the Governor" for subscription to the Indian News Agency telegrams was refused by 63 to 53 votes, and the demand for Rs. 70,000 for the band establishment was refused by 60 to 57 votes. When political disagreement finds expression in petty resentment of a personal character, an unhappy atmosphere is created which takes time to clear away. It is therefore to be hoped that the conventions that prevail in other countries will soon take deeper root, and cuts such as those just mentioned will be regarded as the symptoms of an undeveloped sense of parliamentary etiquette and responsibility. The expenditure in question was certified by His Excellency Lord Lytton under section 72 (*d*) of the Government of India Act.

**Supplementary grants.**

120. As has been noted already, the Council signalised its commencement of office by granting a supplementary sum of Rs. 24,775 on account of the salaries of two Ministers for the remainder of the financial year 1926-27. Other supplementary grants were a sum of Rs. 4,000 for payment of interest on the deposit of Rs. 50,000 made by the Jain community, a sum of Rs. 15,000 to meet relief charges in connection with the flood in the Midnapore district, and in August a sum of Rs. 2,00,000 for the payment of loans to cultivators under the Agriculturists' Loans Act.

**Legislation.**

121. The two following Bills were passed during the year:—

(1) The Bengal Borstal Schools Bill, 1927.

(2) The Calcutta Vehicles Bill, 1927.

Both of these received the assent of His Excellency the Governor, and are now in force. The former effected great improvements in the treatment of juvenile offenders, and the latter placed office *jauns* in the streets of Calcutta definitely under police control.

122. The following two Government Bills are pending in the Council:—

(1) The Bengal Land Development Bill, 1927, introduced on the 24th of August, 1927, to provide for the development of town-planning schemes in municipal areas.

(2) The Bengal Mining Settlements Bill, 1927, introduced on the 24th August, 1927, to improve conditions in areas inhabited by the mining population.

A motion to circulate number (2) for public opinion was moved by the Government member in charge, and carried by the Council.

Non-official Legislation.

123. No Bill by any non-official member was passed by the Council during the year. Several were due for discussion in the August session, but none were actually taken into consideration, as the Council was prorogued after the conclusion of Government business. In the December session the following four non-official Bills were taken up:—

(1) The Calcutta University Bill, 1927, by Dr. Pramathanath Banerjea,

(2) The Bengal Village Self-Government Amendment Bill, 1927, by Rai Harendranath Chaudhuri,

(3) The Calcutta Municipal Amendment Bill, 1927, by Rai Harendranath Chaudhuri, and

(4) The Calcutta University Bill, 1927, by Babu Manmatha Nath Roy.

All these four Bills were introduced in the Council, and in respect of Nos. (1) and (4), motions were carried that they should be circulated for an expression of public opinion by the 15th February, 1928.

124. It cannot be said that the output of legislation is striking, although widespread satisfaction is felt at the advance in jail administration indicated by the Bengal Borstal Schools Bill.

Resolutions.

125. Two Government resolutions and 240 resolutions of non-official members were tabled for discussion in 1927. Of the Government resolutions one was carried, and the other lost. Of the non-official resolutions two were carried, one lost and two withdrawn without discussion. The remainder could not be discussed at all. The more important of those taken up were—

(1) A resolution recommending that the proposed Legislative Council Chamber building should be entirely stone-faced at an additional cost was moved on the 21st of February, 1927, but was lost.

(2) A resolution recommending a loan of Rs. 36¼ lakhs for the construction of roadways on the Bally Railway bridge was moved, discussed, and carried on the 23rd of August, 1927, by 60 to 47 votes.

Of the non-official members' resolutions the details are as follows:—

(1) A resolution recommending provision for one more Moslem Minister in the Budget for 1927-28 was moved and discussed on the 27th of February, 1927, but was defeated by 72 to 29 votes.

(2) A resolution recommending—

(*a*) that steps be taken to release prisoners belonging to Bengal and put under restraint under Regulation III of 1818, and

(*b*) release of all prisoners detained under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1925,

was moved, discussed and carried on the 23rd February, 1927, by 71 to 26 votes.

(3) A resolution recommending that steps be taken to secure the proceeds of the export duty on jute for Bengal to be utilised for agricultural and sanitary improvements, and for free primary education was carried on the 14th December, 1927.

**Motions for adjournments.**

126. There were four motions for adjournments of the Council for the purpose of discussing definite matters of urgent public importance:

(1) On the 22nd February, 1927, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy moved "that the business of the Council do adjourn for the purpose of discussing the firing on the B. N. Railway employees and strikers at Kharagpur on the 11th February, 1927." The motion was talked out. Notices of two other motions on the same subject were received from Mr. K. C. Roy Chaudhuri and Maulvi Abul Kasem. The Hon'ble the President refused to give his consent to these motions as he had already consented to Dr. Roy's motion.

(2) On the 14th March, 1927, Maulvi Abul Kasem moved "that the business of the Council do adjourn for the purpose of discussing the firing under orders of the District Magistrate of Bakarganj on a crowd of villagers on the 2nd March, 1927, at Ponabilia in the district of Bakarganj and thereby causing a large number of deaths and inflicting serious injuries on many other persons." The motion was talked out.

(3) On the 23rd February, 1927, Rai Harendranath Chaudhuri obtained permission of the House to move a motion for adjournment of the business of the Council "for the purpose of discussing the recent hunger strike of the Bengal detenus in the Insein Jail, Burma." But when the time fixed for discussion was reached the motion was withdrawn by leave of the Council in favour of a resolution which was then under discussion.

(4) On the 19th March, 1927, the Council refused leave asked by Babu Romesh Chandra Bagchi to move a motion for adjournment of the business of the Council "for the purpose of discussing the action of the District Magistrate of Malda in stopping on the 8th March, 1927, at Malda, the worship of the image of Goddess *Kali* by the Hindu Sonthals of the district and in ordering under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, the Santhal Guru Babu Kasiswar Chakrabarty, to leave the jurisdiction of the said district."

These motions are a true reflection of the general political conditions, which prevailed throughout the year. Two of them are directly connected with communal disturbances, while another relates to the vexed question of political prisoners.

**Questions.**

127. Notices were received of 1,134 questions of which 502 were actually put and answered. These figures do not include supplementary questions. The matters on which information was demanded ranged over a wide field, and there were few aspects of the administration regarding which a keen and inquiring spirit did not prevail. Perhaps the most striking feature of the year was an increasing skill in the framing of supplementary questions, which at times amounted almost to cross-examination. In some cases indications are not wanting that the object was not so much to obtain information as to embarrass the Member or Minister, who was being heckled.

**Report of the Committee on Public Accounts, 1925-26**

128. The report of the Bengal Legislative Committee on Public Accounts for the year 1925-26 revealed an excess expenditure under four heads, and the Finance Member was compelled to ask the Council to regularise the expenditure incurred. The amounts were—

(*i*) Rs. 2,081 for Band Establishment under "22.—General Administration."

(*ii*) Rs. 14,813 for pay of Inspectors of Calcutta Police under "26.—Police."

(*iii*) Rs. 59,295 under "45.—Superannuation Allowances and Pensions."

(*iv*) Rs. 8,989 under "46.—Stationery and Printing."

Some discussion ensued on item (*ii*) with regard to which it transpired that the original decision of the Council reducing the grant under this head had not been communicated to the department concerned. Two motions for token reductions were tabled, but the excess expenditure was ultimately allowed by 65 to 47 votes. It must be conceded that the omission to inform a department of the action of the Council with regard to its grants was most unfortunate, but the action of Government in taking the Council so frankly into its confidence disarms criticism. The incident is a further proof that however complete any system may appear to be, experience will always reveal unsuspected defects, which can be removed only by the development of procedure and the establishment of precedents—the essential concomitants of the introduction of a new system of Government.

# Part II.

## CHAPTER I.—PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

**For—**

**Physical features of the country, area, climate and chief staples.**
**Historical summary.**
**Forms of Administration.**
**Character of Land Tenures and system of Surveys and Settlement.**
**Civil Divisions of British Territory.**
**Details of the last census.**

**See—**

**General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 1—141.**

### Changes in the Administration.

1. Leave for four months having been granted to His Excellency the Right Hon'ble Victor Alexander George Robert Bulwer-Lytton, Earl of Lytton, P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Governor of Bengal, with effect from the 11th June 1926, the Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., I.C.S., the senior Member of the Executive Council, was appointed to act as Governor of the Presidency, and the Hon'ble Mr. L. Birley, C.I.E., I.C.S., to be a temporary Member of the Council. The Hon'ble Mr. J. Donald, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., succeeded Sir Hugh Stephenson as the Vice-President of the Bengal Executive Council.

2. On the 10th October 1926, His Excellency Lord Lytton returned from leave and resumed charge of the office of Governor from the Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson, who then resigned his substantive office as Member of the Executive Council and proceeded on leave. The Hon'ble Mr. Birley was again appointed in this vacancy to be a temporary Member of the Council on the 10th October 1926, and, upon his resignation of that office, the Hon'ble Mr. A. N. Moberly, C.I.E., I.C.S., was appointed as a Member of the Bengal Executive Council on the 10th November 1926.

3. The administration of the Transferred Subjects continued to remain with His Excellency the Governor until the 22nd January 1927, when His Excellency appointed Sir Abd-ur-Rahim, K.C.S.I., to be a Minister for the administration of those subjects. As Sir Abd-ur-Rahim resigned his office four days later, His Excellency appointed Mr. Byomkes Chakravarti and Hadji Mr. A. K. Abu Ahmed Khan Ghuznavi to be Ministers on the 27th January 1927.

4. During the year there was a change in the Governorship of Bengal. Colonel the Right Hon'ble Sir Francis Stanley Jackson, P.C., G.C.I.E., succeeded the Earl of Lytton, and took his seat as Governor of Bengal and President in Council on the 28th March 1927.

5. In consequence of motions of no confidence in Ministers having been passed by the Bengal Legislative Council, both the Ministers resigned their office on the 27th August 1927, and the administration of the Transferred Subjects was again taken over by His Excellency the Governor under the Transferred Subjects (Temporary Administration) Rules.

## Relations with the Tributary States and Frontier Affairs.

### (a) COOCH BEHAR.

[Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State for the year 1926-27.]

*Area—1,307 square miles; population—592,489; chief products—rice, jute and tobacco; military force—297 men and 4 guns; present Maharaja—His Highness Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur.*

6. The constitution of the Regency Council underwent a change during the year under report. Lieutenant-Colonel H. G. Hutchinson, I.A., O.B.E., who was appointed by the Government of India as Vice-President of the Regency Council, took over charge from Major C. T. C. Plowden, I.A., on the 20th November 1926. He was afterwards appointed to be a Justice of the Peace within the State.

State Railway.

7. The gross earnings of the Cooch Behar State Railway amounted to Rs. 4,87,497, and the net earnings to Rs. 2,63,635. The percentage of working expenses over gross earnings was 45·92, against 45·96 of the previous year.

Finance.

8. The revenue of the State amounted to Rs. 39,85,817 against Rs. 38,66,879 of the previous year, while the expenditure amounted to Rs. 41,25,148 against Rs. 40,61,381 of the previous year. A sum of Rs. 4,86,432 was expended during the year in repayment of State debts out of the provision of Rs. 5,00,000.

Crops and condition of the people.

9. The total rainfall during the year was 131·76, against 128·60 of the previous year. The heavy rain in June and July retarded the growth of the *bitri* paddy and jute crops and the weeding of the latter. Owing to scanty rainfall during September and October, the *haimanti* seedlings did not thrive, and the steeping and washing of jute could not be carried on properly. Conse-

quently, the outturn of both was unsatisfactory. The outturn of jute was 75 per cent. of the normal, and the price ranged from Rs. 8 to Rs. 16 per maund during the year. The price of common rice varied from Rs. 6 to Rs. 7-8 per maund, while the outturn of tobacco was normal.

Education.

10. The number of subdivisional higher English schools was 4 as in the preceding year. The number of primary schools was 291, against 278 of the previous year. The Victoria College continued to make satisfactory progress.

Public Health.

11. The general health of the people was on the whole good, though there were outbreaks of cholera and small-pox in the interior of the State.

## (*b*) TRIPURA.

[Annual Administration Report of the Tripura State for the year 1926-27.]

*Area—4,116 square miles; population—3,04,437; revenue from the zamindaries—Rs. 10,49,832; chief products—rice, cotton, til, mustard, jute and sugarcane; military strength—222, including officers; present Maharaja—His Highness Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Deb Barman Bahadur, Maharaja of Tripura; age—19 years; family—Indo-Chinese; caste—Kshatriya; residence—Agartala.)*

12. His Highness the Maharaja's administrative training was completed during the year, and he was vested with ruling powers on attaining the age of 19 years on the 19th August 1927.

Political Agent.

13. Mr. A. J. Dash, I.C.S., continued to be the Political Agent of the State till 18th March 1927, when he proceeded on leave. Mr. N. L. Hindley, I.C.S., officiated during his absence. On Mr. Dash's transfer, Mr. W. H. Nelson, I.C.S., was appointed Political Agent of the State.

Revenue and Finance.

14. The total revenue of the State amounted to Rs. 18,50,807, against Rs. 17,53,961 in the previous year. The total receipts from all sources including deposits and law charges recovered amounted to Rs. 34,01,587, against Rs. 31,22,017 in the previous year, and with the opening balance of Rs. 9,88,270 the total sum available for expenditure, excluding the deposit money of the Maharanees, was Rs. 41,29,857, against Rs. 40,63, 200 in the preceding year.

Protection.

15. The total number of cases reported to the Police was 1,318, against 1,282 in the previous year. The number of persons arrested

was 711; 638 persons were sent up for trial during the year, of whom 171 were convicted. The percentage of stolen property recovered was 14·95, against 45·4 in the previous year.

Weather and crops.

16. The average rainfall of the year was 110·04 inches, against 108·28 in the previous year and the quinquennial average of 93·92 inches. The outturn of *aus* and *pous* paddy was not satisfactory. Other crops, such as mustard, jute, potatoes and chillies, yielded a normal outturn. The tea industry showed appreciable progress and the production of jute increased, but the market was more or less dull.

Public Health.

17. During the year there were 100 deaths from cholera and 98 from small-pox. Of 233 patients treated for kala-azar, 134 were cured, 79 gave up treatment, 17 continued under treatment and 3 died.

General.

18. The number of children attending schools in the State was 6,331, against 5,876 in the previous year, this increase being accompanied by a reduction in the number of primary schools.

## Condition of the People.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1926-27.]

19. The material condition of the people during the year under report showed no marked change. The labouring classes fared well on account of the high rates of wages for skilled, unskilled and agricultural labour; but as in previous years, the landless middle class people depending on fixed incomes continued to suffer from the high price of the necessaries of life.

20. There were several natural calamities during the year, of which the cyclone in the Cox's Bazar subdivision of the Chittagong district and the flood in the Contai, Tamluk and the Sadar subdivisions of the district of Midnapore were very severe. Prompt and adequate measures were, however, taken by Government for the relief of the distressed people, and valuable aid was received from the public. The weather conditions were not altogether favourable, but the outturn of paddy and jute crops in the province as a whole was fair, and the prevalent high rates of wages for labour were not affected. There was a slight fall in the prices of cloth, but as regards other necessaries of life there was no appreciable variation. The rates of interest charged by private money-lenders did not show any tendency to rise, perhaps owing to a steady increase in the number of co-operative credit societies.

21. The coal industry suffered from the effects of continued depression, but there was a considerable improvement in the prospects of the Kulti and Asansol Iron Works. The other chief industries of the province, namely, jute and tea, had a fairly prosperous year. Miscellaneous industries are holding their own in the mufassal districts of Bengal. Weaving, the most important of home industries, however, did not fare so well as in previous years, as prices had to be reduced in competition with mills; but in some places weavers were compensated to a certain extent by a greater demand. There has been an extension of indigenous electric light and transport companies, and passengers alighting from the train at any country station of importance have learnt to expect a bus or motor-car to take them to their village homes. The management of these bus services is entirely local, and it is increasingly clear that the motor industry has a big future in Bengal.

22. There was no outbreak of serious epidemic diseases, although stray cases of cholera, small-pox and malaria occurred here and there all over the Presidency. As in previous years, the heaviest mortality was due to malaria and kala-azar. Anti-malarial societies and kala-azar centres continued to do good work and their usefulness is being gradually appreciated.

# CHAPTER II.—ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

## Realisation of the Revenue.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1926-27.]

Total collection.

23. The total number of estates paying land revenue was 100,295 against 100,093 in the preceding year. Of these, 93,374 were permanently-settled estates, 4,200 were temporarily-settled, and 2,721 were estates under the direct management of Government. The current demand on account of land revenue for the year was Rs. 2,91,09,322 against Rs. 2,78,94,851 in the preceding year. Out of the increase of Rs. 12,14,471 a sum of Rs. 10,94,252 is due merely to a change made in 1925-26 in the kist dates of four permanently-settled estates in the district of Burdwan. The total realizable demand, including arrears of Rs. 14,59,525 was Rs. 3,05,68,847, out of which the amount collected was Rs. 2,89,33,296, being 94·64 per cent. of the total and 99·39 per cent. of the current demand against 94·8 and 100·1 per cent., respectively, in the previous year. The total remissions amounted to Rs. 75,328 against Rs. 95,195 in the preceding year.

Miscellaneous land revenue.

24. The total collections of miscellaneous land revenue amounted to Rs. 6·44 lakhs against 7·18 lakhs in the preceding year. The decrease was mainly due to the decrease in the receipts under—(1) sale of Government lands, and (2) value of revenue abated under Act I of 1894.

Redemption of land revenue.

25. The total number of petty estates and holdings, the land revenue of which was redeemed during the year, was 302 against 304 in the preceding year. With the exception of two petty estates in the district of Chittagong, these were permanently-settled holdings in the Government estates of Calcutta, the 24-Parganas and Hooghly. The total amount of land revenue redeemed was Rs. 491 and the total price realised Rs. 14,599. The total revenue redeemed up to date amounts to Rs. 36,124, for which Rs. 900,268 has been received as redemption money.

Coercive measures (a) Sale Law.

26. The number of defaults and sales during the year was 10,980 and 921, respectively, against 11,482 and 1,023 in the preceding year. The number of exemptions from sale under section 18, including those for petty arrears, was 9,454 or 86·1 per cent. of the total defaults. The Sale Law was administered

with moderation and only 8·3 per cent. of the total defaults were brought to sale. The average price realised by sale was 4·45 times the Government revenue.

(*b*) Certificates.

27. The total number of certificate cases instituted during the year, excluding those for cesses, rose from 66,152 in 1925-26 to 72,638. The percentage of certificate cases disposed of to the total number for disposal was 77·4 against 79·2 in the previous year and the number of cases pending at the close of the year was 21,027 against 19,586 at the end of the preceding year. In the majority of cases payments were made on the issue of notices or on attachment of property, and actual sale was necessary only in 2,357 cases, or 3·2 per cent. of the total number of cases (72,079) disposed of during the year.

## Other Revenue Work.

Land Registration.

28. The number of proprietary interests entered in the land registration registers was 1,020,533 at the beginning of the year as against 1,027,197 at its close. On account of the continued lack of funds, the rewriting of land registration registers on the basis of the records-of-rights had again to be postponed in all districts of the Presidency.

Partitions.

29. There were 216 cases pending at the close of the preceding year and 39 fresh cases were instituted. Out of the total of 255 cases, 41 cases were disposed of. Special officers were employed exclusively on partition work during the latter part of the year in the district of Rajshahi and throughout the year in the district of Mymensingh. The incidence of cost per acre of the area partitioned during the year was 7 annas 10 pies in Dacca and 5 annas 7 pies in Mymensingh.

Land Acquisition.

30. During the year proceedings for the acquisition of a total area of 1,335·47 acres of land were confirmed at a total cost of Rs. 32,46,964 against 955·81 acres at Rs. 76,95,798 in the previous year. The reason for the decrease in the total cost is that less land was acquired in the town of Calcutta, where rates are naturally high. The area acquired for Government purposes (including projects for railways, military and postal purposes) was 674·49 acres and the cost Rs. 8,89,195, as compared with 277·03 acres and Rs. 4,78,622 in the previous year. The quantity of land acquired for local bodies and companies was 660·98 acres against 678·78 acres in the previous year.

31. The total amount of the abatement of land revenue allowed to zamindars on account of lands acquired was

Rs. 1,075-6-3, of which Rs. 333-7-11 was for lands acquired for the purposes of Government (excluding railways, military and postal projects). The capitalised value of the balance of the abatement realised from Railway, Military and Postal authorities and other bodies amounted to Rs. 18,562-3-5.

Loans. Land Improvement and Agriculturists' Loans Acts.

32. The outstanding balance of loans with interest under the Land Improvement Loans Act at the beginning of the year was Rs. 1,03,667. Only the Presidency and Dacca Divisions took advantage of this Act during the year. The total amount due for collection was Rs. 29,257, of which Rs. 26,781 was realised.

The outstanding balance of loans with interest under the Agriculturists' Loans Act, as it stood at the beginning of the year under report, was Rs. 1,72,519 and the amount advanced during the year was Rs. 3,92,420. The largest sums were issued in the districts of Midnapore (Rs. 2,34,985), Chittagong (Rs. 56,537), Khulna (Rs. 25,000) and Bakarganj (Rs. 18,420). The large amount for Midnapore was due to failure of crops in consequence of floods. The total realisable amount with interest during the year under report was Rs. 2,18,939 and the total recovery amounted to Rs. 1,44,084, Rs. 11,917 being remitted.

## Surveys.

[Report on the Survey Department, Bengal, for the year ending 30th September 1926.]

Outturn of the year.

33. The main traverse programme consisted of 786·47 square miles in the 24-Parganas, 836 square miles in Birbhum and 348·61 square miles in Chittagong. A special traverse survey was made of about 16 square miles of the Southern Salt Lake for and at the cost of the Corporation of Calcutta. Traverse survey of scattered areas of about 94 square miles in the district of Bakarganj was carried out during the year.

Of the miscellaneous work done by the Survey Section, the demarcation of the boundary between Darjeeling and Nepal, the survey of the Reiling Government estate in the district of Darjeeling and the preliminary survey of the provincial boundary between Rangpur in Bengal and Goalpara in Assam deserve special mention.

## Land Records and Settlement.

[Annual Report on the Survey and Settlement operations in Bengal for the year ending 30th September 1926.]

General.

34. Cadastral survey and settlement operations were conducted in 13 districts. The total area for which a record-of-rights has now been completed is 46,915 square miles out of 65,775 in the Province to which the Bengal Tenancy Act applies.

Major settlement.

35. Major settlement operations were in full swing in the districts of Murshidabad-Birbhum and the 24-Parganas, while in Khulna, Nadia and Pabna-Bogra the work was in its closing stages.

36. During the year the Khulna revision of land revenue was completed for the whole district of Khulna and has resulted in an increase of Rs. 78,000. Resumptions of alluvial accretions in four rivers in block A were confirmed by the Board of Revenue. In block B proceedings on two rivers are pending for confirmation and in three others they will shortly be submitted. In block C proceedings will be undertaken on 11 rivers. The printing of records-of-rights has been completed, except for those villages affected by diara resumption. Of the total recoverable cost of Rs. 16,38,175, Rs. 13,19,546 has so far been realised. Up to the end of the year applications under section 105 of the Bengal Tenancy Act had been filed in respect of 8,266 tenancies and final orders had been passed in respect of 6,740.

Nadia.

37. In Nadia the principal work during the year arose from cases under sections 105, 106, 108A and 180A of the Bengal Tenancy Act. Under section 105 of the Act raiyati rents were enhanced from 2 to 3 annas in the rupee. The prolongation of settlement proceedings in the district is mainly due to the delay in the disposal of diara cases. Out of the total recoverable demand of Rs. 17,86,924, the balance still outstanding amounts to about Rs. 28,000.

Pabna-Bogra.

38. In the Pabna-Bogra settlement the field work consisted mainly of the attestation and disposal of objections in the Government and temporarily-settled estates along the Jamuna river. Resettlement of land revenue has been completed in all the estates taken up in blocks A, B and C, though 8 are still pending for confirmation. The total increase of revenue from these estates is over Rs. 18,000. Resumption of alluvial accretions has been taken up along 8 rivers; 16,000 cases under sections 105 and 360 cases under section 106 of the Bengal Tenancy Act were disposed of during the year. Records-of-rights, excepting those for villages in which diara resumption or resettlement of land revenue is being

carried on, have been finally printed. The total amount realised up to date on account of the cost of the operations is Rs. 16,85,000 and the balance outstanding is about Rs. 4,80,000.

Murshidabad-Birbhum.

39. In the Murshidabad-Birbhum settlement, the cadastral area consisted of 670 square miles, which proved to be a very heavy programme. Attestation was carried out in B block on a programme of 3,70,000 interests and the work was completed in good time. Objections under section 103A of the Bengal Tenancy Act were filed in about 5 per cent. of the interests attested. They were mostly about *mokarari* status. Resettlement of revenue will be made in 78 estates, in 21 of which work commenced during the year. It has been decided to take up the resumption of alluvial accretions in some of the rivers of the two districts.

24-Parganas.

40. The cadastral area in the 24-Parganas settlement comprised 918 square miles, including rivers and forests. The traverse in the newer Sunderbans area was not always as well done as it might have been. The area for attestation was 684 square miles out of block A, excluding river and forest area, the total number of interests being 2,84,000. The incidence of interests per square mile varied from 125 in the Sunderbans to 575 in the permanently-settled area. The tenure conditions presented little difficulty, except in the area round Basirhat, and rent disputes were few. Final janch was also organised in five camps spread over the attestation area.

Minor operations.

41. Minor operations were carried on in the districts of Chittagong, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Darjeeling, Bakarganj, Rajshahi and Malda. The work was in its closing stages in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Rajshahi and Malda, while in the other districts new operations were started.

## Waste Lands.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1926-27.]

Waste lands.

42. Special rules regarding waste lands exist for Chittagong, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and the Sunderbans. In Chittagong and Darjeeling no lease of waste lands was granted during the year, while in Jalpaiguri the total area leased was 2,059 acres with an eventual maximum revenue of Rs. 2,835, bringing the total area leased to 1,13,836 acres with an eventual maximum revenue of Rs. 84,131. Wood-cutting is proceeding rapidly in Tengagiri Chak in Bakarganj and, within the last 6 months, it has yielded a revenue of Rs. 52,936. The waste lands at Char Nishanbaria and Kazir Char yield a revenue of Rs. 850 as grazing fees. The

income derived from the waste lands at Lotachapli and other estates on the coast of the Bay of Bengal leased for grazing purposes amounts to Rs. 7,214 annually.

## Government Estates.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1926-27.]

Number and management.

43. The total number of estates under direct management, including those belonging to private individuals and managed by Government, but excluding the Orphangunge Market and the Hastings estate in the 24-Parganas, was 2,720 with an aggregate annual demand of Rs. 52,49,788. The percentage of cost of management on the current demand was 10·29 against 9·7 in the previous year. There was no material change in the system of management of the khas mahals in any of the districts. In the Contai khas mahals in Midnapore, the orders of Government regarding the reduction in the number of *baruas* and the rate of their allowance have been enforced during the year. The introduction of an experimental measure in 1924, by which Sub-Deputy Collectors in charge of certain khas mahals in Bakarganj, Jalpaiguri, Chittagong and Noakhali, were replaced by Settlement Kanungoes, is reported to be working satisfactorily. The scheme for the reorganisation of the system of management of the khas mahals in the district of Bakarganj was sanctioned during the year. A new eighth circle will be established at Char Fasson, and the Amtali circle removed to Galachipa, the headquarters of the Barguna circle being transferred to Amtali.

Grant for improvement.

44. A sum of Rs. 1,99,614 representing 3·7 per cent. of the current demand was spent on agricultural, sanitary and miscellaneous improvements. This is a great advance on the previous four years, when only an average of Rs. 1,21,233 was available. A total amount of Rs. 23,989 was spent during the year for the improvement of *hâts* and markets in the several districts of the Presidency.

Colonization of the Sunderbans—Bakarganj.

45. Colonization in the Bakarganj Sunderbans is now in its twentieth year, and the scheme relating to 22 estates with headquarters at Khepupara is approaching completion. The total sum advanced up to date by Government is Rs. 13,45,875, of which Rs. 3,10,460 has been spent on establishment and Rs. 9,53,727 on improvements. The total receipts have been Rs. 16,41,040, including Rs. 9,99,659 from rent and Rs. 4,88,537 from forest produce. During the year under report 8,648 acres were surveyed and assessment was confirmed of 6 estates with an

initial revenue of Rs. 5,843, eventually rising to Rs. 33,656. Provision is being made for a new scheme in the Bhola subdivision, where many large areas are available for settlement, provided the necessary drinking water tanks are excavated. The total area thus being settled or available for settlement is 35,010 acres and it is calculated that the expenditure proposed will bring a *salami* of Rs. 2,20,000 and a final revenue of Rs. 1,22,000 per annum.

The original colonists have shown a tendency to sell their lands to speculators from outside and the local officers are in favour of the Collector having control of transfers in these areas on the lines of the provisions of Chapter VIIA. of the Tenancy Act, as in the case of the aboriginals in Bankura and Birbhum. If an amended Tenancy Act introduces free transferability of raiyati holdings, it is possible that the legislature will be asked to agree to an exception for these areas. Four tanks for the supply of good drinking water have been excavated during the year in mauza Khaprabhanga. The general character of the colonists is disappointing, but slight indications of increased industry are visible. The entire colonization area is now covered with a net-work of co-operative credit societies, more than 75 per cent. of the colonists being members of rural societies. The Central Bank has several beneficient branches of activity and the 20 Arbitration Boards have been doing useful work. They decided 493 petty disputes during the year under report. The demand for the expansion of primary education in the Sunderbans has been persistent and the tenants have volunteered to make a contribution of 6 pies per rupee of rent. The number of schools and students in the area has increased from 71 and 1,766 in 1925 to 74 and 1,914, respectively, in 1926. There is still ample room for the extension of roads in the Sunderbans and the District Board is being induced to maintain in good condition the Amtali-Khepupara road in the colonization area.

**Colonization of the Sunderbans 24-Parganas.**

46. This was the twelfth year of the colonization scheme in the 24-Parganas Sunderbans. About Rs. 23,000 has been spent in the year under report on the construction of embankments and excavation of tanks. The material condition of the colonists is fairly satisfactory, and efforts are being made to meet the persistent demand for the expansion of primary education among them. The Central Co-operative Bank and the Arbitration Boards have been doing useful work.

***Roads.***

47. During the year under report a sum of Rs. 2,60,647 was spent on roads and communications in, or leading to, Government estates, against a grant of Rs. 87,837, representing 1½ per cent. of collections from Government estates.

Education.

48. The number of schools in Government estates increased from 3,525 to 3,742 and there was a general increase in the number of pupils. The Government grant of 1 per cent. of the total collections from Government estates was exceeded in several districts.

## Wards and Attached Estates.

Number of estates.

49. The total number of estates under the management of the Court of Wards stood at 79 at the beginning of the year under report. Six new estates were brought under the charge of the Court and one released from its management during the year, with the result that there remained 84 estates under its charge at its close.

Collection of rent and cesses.

50. The total demand for rent and cesses in the estates under the management of the Court during the year, including an arrear of Rs. 84,16,711, aggregated Rs. 1,45,34,490, of which Rs. 63,28,188 or 43·5 per cent. was collected against 45·2 per cent. in the previous year. The standard of 100 per cent. collection on current demand was reached or exceeded in 46 estates.

Balance of rent and cesses due to estates.

51. The outstanding balances of rent and cesses in all the estates at the close of the year amounted to Rs. 77,91,419, which represented 127·3 per cent. of the current and 53·6 per cent. of the total demand against 131·1 per cent. and 52·8 per cent., respectively, in the preceding year.

Debts of estates.

52. The total amount of ascertained debts of all the estates in the Presidency stood at the close of the year under report at Rs. 90,83,293 against the corresponding figure of Rs. 85,56,664 in the preceding year. The increase is due to the assumption of charge of some new estates with heavy debts and to the ascertainment of fresh liabilities of some others. The principal repaid or otherwise reduced during the year amounted to Rs. 5,75,362 and the total amount of interest paid or otherwise reduced was Rs. 5,27,471.

Management charges.

53. The percentage of the cost of management of estates in the whole Presidency on their current rent and cess demand was 13·7 against 13·5 in the previous year.

Improvements.

54. In solvent estates the standards fixed for minimum expenditure on education and on works of agricultural and sanitary improvement are 1 and 3 per cent., respectively, on their current rent and cess demands. No standard has been fixed for expenditure on works of miscellaneous improvement. The total amount spent during the year under these heads by the estates in the whole Presidency amounted to Rs. 3,03,336 against Rs. 2,91,034 in the preceding year.

## Revenue and Rent-paying Classes.*

Bengal Tenancy Act—the extent of its application.

55. There was no further extension of the application of the Bengal Tenancy Act during the year under report. The districts of Darjeeling, the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the town of Calcutta continue to be outside the scope of the Act, while in the Duars portion of Jalpaiguri it has only a limited application.

Alienation of land by aborigines.

56. The special provisions of the Bengal Tenancy Act imposing restrictions on the alienation of land by aboriginals were extended during the year to certain aboriginal tribes in the district of Mymensingh.

Commutation of *utbandi* rents.

57. The recent provision for the conversion of *utbandi* tenancies into ordinary raiyati holdings was taken full advantage of and worked satisfactorily in the district of Nadia, where 175 applications for conversion, involving 6,068 tenancies, were filed during the year.

Measure to compel the issue of rent receipts.

58. In only 19 cases were proceedings taken under section 58 of the Bengal Tenancy Act for failure to grant rent receipts. Of these, 9 were struck off, compromised or dismissed, 2 resulted in fine and 8 were pending at the close of the year.

## The Chittagong Hill Tracts.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Chittagong Hill Tracts for the year 1926-27.]

59. In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, which are administered under the Special Regulation I of 1900 and the rules framed thereunder, 547 preliminary leases, covering an area of 2,074 acres, were granted during the year, but there was also a fair number of relinquishments. The total current demand of rent from the lands brought under plough cultivation rose to Rs. 1,18,040 against Rs. 1,13,735 in the previous year. It was only Rs. 14,062 in the year 1900-01. With arrears the total demand during the year was Rs. 1,79,906, of which Rs. 1,09,871 was collected, Rs. 2,384 remitted and Rs. 67,651 remained outstanding. Miscellaneous receipts in connection with land revenue or rent from land amounted to Rs. 43,062.

There were 653 certificate cases filed during the year for realisation of arrears against 770 in the previous year and 109 cases were pending from that year. Of these, 118 cases were cancelled, 593 fully satisfied and 51 remained pending at the close of the year. During the year Rs. 14,800 was advanced as agricultural loans to the tenants and, with arrears of previous loans outstanding at the beginning of the year, the total amount of principal was Rs. 28,530 and of interest Rs. 14,886. Of these amounts Rs. 2,343 was collected, Rs. 5,205 remitted and Rs. 35,868 remained outstanding at the end of the year.

# CHAPTER III.—PROTECTION.

## LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITIES.

See—Bengal Administration Report for 1921-22, pages 154-159.

### Course of Legislation.

60. Five Acts were passed by the Bengal Legislative Council during the year 1926-27. Acts passed.

(*1*) *The Presidency Area (Emergency) Security Act, 1926 (Bengal Act III of 1926)*.—This Act was passed to provide for the safeguarding of life and property in the Presidency area in times of emergency by the removal of turbulent characters for a period to be specified in the order of removal.

(*2*) *The Howrah Bridge Act, 1926 (Bengal Act IV of 1926)*, was passed to provide for the construction, maintenance and control of a new bridge across the river Hooghly between Calcutta and Howrah.

(*3*) *The Calcutta Municipal (Amendment) Act, 1926 (Bengal Act V of 1926)*, was passed to give power to the Calcutta Corporation to initiate or continue legal proceedings in respect of breaches of building regulations and of the provisions of the repealed Act of 1899 (Bengal Act III of 1899).

(*4*) *The Calcutta Port (Amendment No. II) Act, 1926 (Bengal Act VI of 1926)*.—This Act was passed to amend certain sections of the Calcutta Port Act, 1890 (Bengal Act III of 1890), to increase the number of representatives of Indian Commerce on the Calcutta Port Commission and to provide for the *ex-officio* appointment of certain Commissioners in the five seats hitherto filled by nomination.

(*5*) *The Bengal Cruelty to Animals (Amendment) Act, 1926 (Bengal Act VII of 1926)*, was passed to make certain amendments in the parent Act of 1920 to enable the administration of the Act to be entrusted to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The Act of 1920 had hitherto remained inoperative owing to the difficulty of finding a suitable agency to administer its provisions. Opportunity was taken to prohibit the practice of using buffaloes for draught purposes in the middle of the day in the hot season.

Government Bills not proceeded with.

*(1) The Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1926.*—The report of the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the tenancy law of Bengal presented on the 13th July, 1926, contained very material alterations in some of its most important provisions. These were unacceptable to Government, which therefore abstained from proceeding with the Bill and it lapsed with the dissolution of the Council in September, 1926.

*(2) The Bengal Motor-Vehicles Tax Bill, 1926.*—The object of the Bill was to take power for District Boards and Municipalities to tax motor-vehicles kept within their jurisdiction. This Bill was referred to a Select Committee on the 13th July, 1926, and the report of the Committee was presented on the 16th August, 1926.

The Committee recommended that the Bill should be radically altered and a system of provincial taxation introduced.

In accordance with the recommendation of that Committee Government did not proceed further with this Bill and it lapsed with the dissolution of the Council.

Non-official Member's Bill not assented to by the Governor.

*(1) The Calcutta Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1926, by Dr. A. Suhrawardy.*—A Bill to amend the Calcutta Municipal Act, 1923, was introduced in the Council on the 18th August, 1926, the object being to exclude the areas formerly under the Cossipore-Chitpur and Garden Reach municipalities from the limits of the Corporation of Calcutta. It was taken into consideration on the same date and passed, but the Governor, in exercise of the discretion vested in him by sub-section *(1)* of section 81 of the Government of India Act, withheld his assent from the Bill, on the ground that its drafting was far from perfect.

Non-official Member's Bills which lapsed owing to a dilatory motion at consideration stage.

*(1) The Bengal Pasture Bill, 1926, by Dr. H. W. B. Moreno.*—A motion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee was carried by the Council on the 6th July, 1926. The report was presented on the 18th August, 1926, but the motion to take the Bill as reported by the Select Committee into consideration failed owing to a dilatory motion for the recommittal of the Bill to the Select Committee having been carried by the Council on the same date. The Bill lapsed with the dissolution of the Council in September, 1926.

Non-official Member's Bills rejected at consideration stage.

*(1) The Bengal Cattle Bill, 1926, by Dr. H. W. B. Moreno.*—A motion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee was carried by the Council on the 6th July, 1926. The report was presented on the 18th August, 1926, but the motion that the Bill as reported by the Select Committee be taken into consideration was rejected by the Council.

*(2) The Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1925, by Shah Syed Emdadul Haq.*—A motion to take the Bill into consideration was rejected by the Council on the 18th August, 1926.

(3) *The Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1926, by Shah Syed Emdadul Haq.*—A Bill to amend the Bengal Village Self-Government Act, 1919, was introduced in the Council on the 19th August, 1926, but the motion to take the Bill into consideration was rejected on the same date.

Non-official Member's Bill withdrawn at consideration stage.

(1) *The Bengal Local Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1926, by Shah Syed Emdadul Haq.*—A Bill further to amend the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885 was introduced in the Council on the 19th August, 1926. A motion to take the Bill into consideration was moved and discussed on the same date, but ultimately withdrawn.

Non-official Member's Bill not proceeded with.

(1) *The Wagering Association Bill, 1926, by Babu Debi Prosad Khaitan.*—A Bill to provide for the suppression of wagering associations in Calcutta was introduced on the 6th July, 1926, but on the motion for reference to a Select Committee, a dilatory motion that the Bill be circulated for opinion was carried by the Council on the same date. No further motion was made in respect of the Bill which therefore lapsed with the dissolution of the Council in September, 1926.

Non-official Members' Bills rejected at the time of reference to Select Committees.

(1) *The Bengal "Phuka" Bill, 1925, by Dr. H. W. B. Moreno.*

(2) *The Calcutta Rent (Amendment No. II) Bill, 1925, by Dr. H. W. B. Moreno.*

(3) *The Calcutta Domestic Servants' Registration Bill, 1925, by Dr. H. W. B. Moreno.*

On the 6th July, 1926, the Council rejected motions to refer the above three bills to Select Committees.

Non-official Members' Bills rejected at the time of introduction.

(1) *The Calcutta Rent (Repeal) Bill, 1926, by Babu Amulya Dhone Addy.*

(2) *The Calcutta Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1926, by Babu Amulya Dhone Addy.*

(3) *The Bengal Court of Wards (Amendment) Bill, 1926, by Nawab Musharruf Hossain, Khan Bahadur.*

(4) *The Calcutta Improvement (Amendment) Bill, 1926, by Babu Amulya Dhone Addy.*

Motions for leave to introduce the above four Bills were rejected by the Council on the 6th July, 1926.

(5) *The Bengal Prevention of Brothels in Fairs Bill, 1926, by Shah Syed Emdadul Haq.*—On the 6th July, 1926, a motion for leave to introduce this Bill was rejected by the Council on a division by 33 to 12 votes.

(6) *The Calcutta Rent (Amendment) Bill, 1926, by Dr. H. W. B. Moreno.*—A motion for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Calcutta Rent Act, 1920, was rejected by the Council on the 19th August, 1926.

## Police Administration in the Bengal Presidency.

[The Report of the Police Administration in the Bengal Presidency for the year 1926.]

**Eastern Frontier Rifles.**

61. The efficiency and discipline of the Bengal Battalion were severely tested during the year, when detachments were placed on duty in disturbed areas in Calcutta, Kharagpur and elsewhere. The force proved itself invaluable in the maintenance and restoration of order.

**Strength and recruitment.**

62. A striking feature of the year was the large number of vacancies in the establishment of the police force, which reacted unfavourably on the health and contentment of the men who had in consequence to be refused leave. Further, Superintendents report that men of the type desired are not presenting themselves for enlistment as constables. There can be no doubt that recruitment is affected by the low pay, which contrasts unfavourably with the wages which can be earned in employments involving less hardship and fewer restrictions on personal liberty than does service in the police force.

**Health of the Force.**

63. The health of the force showed no improvement on the previous year and the number of admissions to hospital was again very large. Insufficient leave contributed to this unsatisfactory state of affairs. Other causes were the low pay of the constables, bad housing and inadequacy of protective measures.

The proper housing of the police force is a matter of urgent importance as it will certainly improve the health and efficiency of the men and prove economical in the long run.

**Discipline.**

64. There was a slight increase in the number of criminal cases brought by private individuals against members of the force and also in the number of convictions which followed. The fact that nearly half of the complaints were dismissed after a summary inquiry suggests that there is a tendency to bring false and frivolous charges against the police. As such accusations are in many cases brought in order to obstruct investigation and prejudice the courts against investigating officers, it is desirable that the educated public should co-operate in securing the punishment of persons who are responsible for bringing such charges. The exposure of investigating officers to reckless accusations is bound to have a bad effect on their morale and to react unfavourably on their work.

Police Training School.

65. The reduction to three months of the period of training which recruits undergo at the school was found to be unsatisfactory and it has been proved that training in the districts is a very poor substitute. Having regard to the type of man now offering himself for enlistment and the high standard of discipline demanded of the force, nothing short of a six months' course at the school can be regarded as at all adequate and the question of expanding the school demands immediate consideration. The health of the men under training was good.

Crime and detection.

66. The continued decrease in the number of cognisable cases, including a fall of about 23 per cent. in the number of burglaries and about 16 per cent. in the number of thefts, was very gratifying. While it is possible that reluctance on the part of persons living at a distance from a police-station to report occurrences in which they had been the victims was in some degree responsible for the decrease, it is reasonable to attribute it generally to the organisation of patrols, the use of the preventive sections of the Criminal Procedure Code, and vigorous action under the law relating to criminal tribes and gangs. The increase in the number of village defence parties and the good work done by such parties in the prevention of crime and in the arrest of suspects also undoubtedly contributed to the reduction of offences against property. In the percentage of convictions Bengal compared very favourably with other provinces.

Industrial School at Nilphamari.

67. The Salvation Army School at Nilphamari has been established as an industrial school for the children of the Karwal Nats of the Saidpur settlement in the district of Rangpur. The Nat children between the ages of six and eighteen have been separated from their parents or guardians and placed in the school. The officer of the Salvation Army holding charge of the school has been appointed as its Superintendent, and it is to be hoped that this effort to reclaim the children of people traditionally addicted to crime will be successful.

Revolutionary crime.

68. The value of the powers conferred on Government by the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act was demonstrated by the contrast between the years 1923-24 with their long tale of outrages, and the period which has elapsed since the Act was passed. Vigilance on the part of the officers of the Criminal Investigation Department ending in the discovery of arms and ammunition in the possession of terrorists undoubtedly prevented a fresh series of outrages.

Communal friction.

69. The riots in Calcutta had repercussions in the mufassal, particularly at Pabna, Dacca and Kharagpur, which subjected the police force to the severest strain. In these disturbances the difficult task of restoring order was carried out with firmness, tact

and impartiality in the face of considerable obstruction and malicious criticism.

Rural police.

70. There was a further increase in the number of instances in which village chaukidars and dafadars were suspected of participation in offences against property. The necessity of selecting good men for appointment as village watchmen and of urging on union boards the advisability of raising the pay of these men was impressed on the Divisional Commissioners. Complaints were made of a falling off in the amount of information conveyed to thana officers by the rural police, which was attributed to the partial transfer of control over chaukidars to union boards. It is hoped that this transfer of control will not permanently interfere with the efficiency of the forces operating for the prevention of crime. In the present stage of transition a president of a union board may be more eager to assert the importance of his position *vis-a-vis* that of the thana officer than to assist him, but it can reasonably be expected that with the development of union boards and the increase of their activities in matters relating to sanitation and communications, the presidents will recognise the value of co-operation with the highly trained officers of the police force and will realise the necessity of furnishing them with any information which may be of value in the prevention and detection of crime.

## Police Administration in Calcutta.

[The Report on the Police Administration in the town of Calcutta and its suburbs for the year 1926.]

Strength.

71. The number of vacancies at the close of the year was higher than in 1925. This was mainly due to the falling off in recruitment, the pay of the constable evidently being insufficient to attract men of the necessary standard of physical fitness for the arduous work required of them in Calcutta. There were several notable additions to the establishment during the year. These were mainly necessitated by the pressure of conditions arising out of the tension between Hindus and Muhammadans and the development of motor traffic. In spite of the great strain to which the members of the force were subjected, the daily average percentage of sickness was only 2·8.

Housing.

72. Some progress was made with the town building scheme, but much remains to be done. It is particularly regrettable that the difficulties which arose in connection with the site of the Barrabazar Section house should have delayed the commencement of building operations.

73. In spite of the unprecedentedly high figures against murder and rioting there was a decrease in the total number of cognisable cases reported to the police. A gratifying feature was the continued decrease in the number of cases of robbery, burglary and theft. The fact that since 1923 there has been, in each year, a decrease in the number of such cases, bears testimony to the efficacy of the Goondas Act and the good work of the police. The Presidency Area Emergency Security Act also proved of great value in dealing with criminal gangs. Crime statistics.

74. The brutal murder in the Alipore Jail of Rai Bhupendra Nath Chatarji Bahadur by some young men who had been convicted of offences under the Arms Act and Explosives Act was significant of the mentality of many so-called political criminals and by its nature as an act of vengeance on an officer who had been engaged in operations under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act provided further evidence of the existence of a terrorist party which regards murder as a legitimate method of remedying its grievances. Revolutionary crime.

75. The rapidly growing bitterness of relations between the two largest sections of the community culminated in a violent outburst of communal rioting in three well-marked phases in April and July. The resources of the police were not sufficient to enable them to cope with the situation, and military aid had to be called in. The difficulty of the situation was intensified by the complete failure of many of the leaders to control their followers or to support the cause of law and order. On the contrary, in the press and on the platform, the wildest allegations were made, as the result of which Government were forced to institute a number of prosecutions under sections 124A and 153A of the Indian Penal Code. Communal friction.

76. There were indications that the number of vehicles plying for hire had reached the point where supply was equal to demand. This taken with the increase in the number of officers employed on traffic duty should facilitate the study of traffic problems, and it is hoped that when measures now under consideration are brought into operation, traffic control in Calcutta will be as satisfactory as in any other large city. Traffic.

77. On more than one occasion during recent years the attention of Government had been directed to the difficulty of controlling office-jauns. The Commissioner of Police, the Calcutta Corporation, the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Automobile Association had all urged the desirability of registering all office-jauns so that they might be readily identified. In the absence of a number, or other permanent mark, it was difficult The Calcutta Vehicles Act, 1927.

for any one who was injured by an office-jaun or for the police to trace its owner. Difficulty had also been experienced in dealing with the drivers of these vehicles, as they usually gave wrong names and addresses or disappeared to their native districts if a summons was served on them. Whilst all other classes of street traffic are subject to some control, office-jauns, which are a serious danger at congested points, were able to ignore traffic directions with impunity, because of the difficulty of tracing them. With the constant increase in the number of vehicles in use in the business quarters of Calcutta the danger arising from the lack of control over office-jauns was becoming more and more serious.

It was, therefore, considered necessary to provide for the registration of office-jauns and Government decided to take powers under a separate enactment for the registration of all horse-drawn vehicles and the licensing of drivers as in the case of motor vehicles, and to exempt, by notification, from the operation of the provisions for licensing and control any vehicle or class of vehicle of types which can be controlled without difficulty or are not likely to be a source of danger. The Calcutta Vehicles Bill was therefore introduced and passed in the August session of the Legislative Council.

**Cruelty to Animals Act.**

78. Considerable progress was made in the work of preventing cruelty to animals.

For working the Act, the C. S. P. C. A. was granted a contribution of Rs. 1,20,000 instead of the fine receipts from prosecutions which had hitherto been credited to them. Further, the employment of buffaloes as draught animals was prohibited in Calcutta under the Bengal Cruelty to Animals Act during the months of April, May and June, 1927, between the hours of 12 noon and 3 P.M. The order was completely effective and enforced without any difficulty. On the appearance of monsoon conditions, the restriction was withdrawn on the 9th June, 1927.

## Mortality caused by Wild Animals and Snakes.

[Report on the above and measures taken for the destruction of wild animals and snakes during 1926. Statistics of British India, Part V—Area, Population and Public Health.]

**Wild animals.**

79. The number of persons killed by wild animals increased from 173 to 181 in 1926.

Tigers were responsible for 25 deaths as against 23 in 1925.

80. The number of persons who died from snake-bites rose from 4,386 to 4,408 in 1926. The increase occurred in the Burdwan, Presidency and Chittagong Divisions. Snakes.

81. The number of wild animals killed was 1,076. Rewards paid for the destruction of wild animals and snakes totalled Rs. 4,846-6 and Rs. 175-1, respectively, as against Rs. 5,759 and Rs. 437-2 in the previous year. Destruction of wild animals.

## Criminal Justice.

[Report on the Administration of Criminal Justice in the Presidency of Bengal during the year 1926.]

82. For sessions work, the staff consisted of 21 Sessions Judges and 10 Additional Sessions Judges throughout the year. Subordinate Judges vested with the powers of Assistant Sessions Judge were employed in seven districts and decided 149 cases. There were also twelve temporary Additional Sessions Judges employed for varying periods in different districts. Judicial staff.

The magisterial staff employed at the close of the year, including that of the Presidency town, consisted of 411 stipendiary and 635 honorary magistrates. Three special magistrates were employed one each at Burdwan, Pabna and Noakhali during the year. They decided 1, 28 and 131 cases, respectively. Of the 411 stipendiary magistrates, 274 exercised first, 97 second and 40 third class powers.

There were 128 benches of magistrates constituted from among 610 honorary magistrates in the mufassal.

83. The number of offences reported during the year combined with the number pending from the previous year was 382,117 against 392,583 in 1925. Offences reported.

Of the total number of cases under inquiry, 302,783 were found to be true, and of these, 256,806 were brought to trial.

## Original Jurisdiction.

### *I.—Presidency Magistrates' Courts.*

84. Of the total number of cases brought to trial 106,624 were in the courts of the police and municipal magistrates in the Presidency town, and 150,182 in the courts of magistrates in the mufassal. Total cases for trial.

The number of cases brought before the Presidency Magistrates, including the municipal magistrates, was 6,351 less than in 1925. There was a fall in the number of cases under special and local laws and also under the Penal Code. Under the latter head the most noticeable features were the decrease in offences affecting the public health and the increase in cases of hurt. The percentage of convictions before stipendiary magistrates amounted to 82·3 and before honorary magistrates sitting singly 97·1. The percentage of convictions before municipal magistrates was 93.

*II.—Magistrates outside Calcutta.*

**Cases disposed of.**

85. Including cases committed to the sessions 150,057 cases were disposed of during the year.

The disposals were distributed as follows:—

| | |
|---|---|
| District Magistrates .. .. .. .. | 83 |
| Subordinate stipendiary magistrates .. .. | 127,145 |
| Honorary magistrates .. .. .. .. | 10,087 |
| Benches of magistrates .. .. .. .. | 12,554 |
| Special magistrates .. .. .. .. | 160 |

In addition to the cases shown above, district and subdivisional magistrates decided 28 cases referred to them under sections 347 and 349 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The total number of cases disposed of by the District Magistrates was 111, the largest number (38) having been decided by the District Magistrate of Midnapore.

**Results of trials.**

86. In the cases finally disposed of by magistrates, 217,093 persons were accused. Of the total, 96,446 or 44·4 per cent. were convicted and 120,647 or 55·6 per cent. were acquitted or discharged.

**Punishments.**

87. The sentences passed on persons convicted were as follows:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Imprisonment .. .. .. .. | 15,654 |
| Fine or forfeiture .. .. .. .. | 78,275 |
| Whipping .. .. .. .. .. | 207 |

In addition to these sentences, 4,223 persons were required to give security.

The fines imposed aggregated Rs. 9,58,651. Rupees 7,52,061 was realised, of which Rs. 1,16,662 was paid as compensation to complainants.

88. The total number of miscellaneous cases decided during the year was 8,370 against 8,145 in the previous year. Miscellaneous proceedings under the Code of Criminal Procedure.

89. The number of witnesses examined in the courts of magistrates in the mufassal was 350,585 as compared with 355,627 in 1925. The number who attended and were discharged without examination was 171,231 or 32·8 per cent. of the whole number in attendance; the percentage in the preceding year was 31·4. The amount paid to witnesses on account of the expenses of their attendance rose from Rs. 2,78,819 in 1925 to Rs. 3,05,565 in 1926. Witnesses.

### *III.—Courts of Session.*

90. The number of cases disposed of in the courts of session was 1,311 against 1,330 in the previous year. Cases disposed of.

91. There were 4,880 persons, or 318 more than in 1925, under trial before the courts of session. Of the 3,598 persons tried, 1,741 or 48·3 per cent. were convicted and 1,737 were acquitted or discharged, and the cases of 120 persons were referred to the High Court under sections 307 and 374 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Results of trials.

92. The following sentences were passed by the courts of session :— Punishments.

| | |
|---|---|
| Death .. .. .. .. .. | 12 |
| Transportation or penal servitude .. .. .. | 44 |
| Imprisonment .. .. .. .. | 1,693 |
| Fine or forfeiture .. .. .. .. | 122 |
| Whipping .. .. .. .. .. | 1 |

In addition to these sentences 218 persons were required to give security.

The fines imposed aggregated Rs. 21,918 of which Rs. 1,673 was realised.

93. The number of witnesses in attendance before the courts of session was 27,851. Of these, 18,394 were examined and 9,457 discharged without examination. The amount paid to witnesses on account of the expenses incurred by them in attending sessions trials was Rs. 1,25,158 as compared with Rs. 1,40,599 in 1925. Witnesses.

94. The number of cases disposed of was 59 against 47 in the previous year. Cases disposed of in the High Court Sessions.

Altogether 154 persons were tried, of whom 68 were convicted and 86 acquitted.

## Appellate Jurisdiction.

### *I.—High Court.*

95. At the opening of the year, 103 appeals from sentences or orders of criminal courts were pending before the High Court. During the year 753 appeals were preferred and 730 were decided leaving 126 pending at its close.

Results of appeals.

96. Four hundred and forty-eight appeals against sentences of courts of session were decided. The orders of the lower courts were upheld in 380, modified in 22 and reversed in 24 instances. Twenty-two cases were remanded for retrial.

Two hundred and seventy-eight appeals from the orders of magistrates of the Presidency town were decided, the orders being affirmed in 247, modified in 15 and reversed in 12 cases. Four cases were remanded for retrial.

Of the 3 appeals preferred by the Local Government and decided during the year, 1 was allowed, 1 dismissed and 1 case remanded for retrial.

### *II.—Appellate Courts Subordinate to the High Court.*

Sessions courts.

97. The number of appeals disposed of in the courts of session was 4,385 against 4,411 in the previous year. In the appeals decided, 7,976 persons were concerned.

The appeals of 1,963 persons or 24·6 per cent. were summarily dismissed; 2,869 appellants, whose appeals were admitted, were altogether unsuccessful; 1,157 obtained an alteration of sentence; and 1,769 were acquitted. The cases of 218 appellants were otherwise disposed of. In the case of admitted appeals, the results on the whole were less favourable to appellants than in the previous year.

Magistrates' courts.

98. In the courts of magistrates, 3,444 appeals were decided against 2,907 in the previous year. In the appeals decided, 5,876 persons were concerned. Of these, the appeals of 787 were rejected, and the sentences on 2,339 whose appeals were admitted, were confirmed, making a total of 3,126 wholly unsuccessful appellants, or 53·2 per cent. Of the remainder, 717 appellants or 12·2 per cent. obtained an alteration of the sentences passed on them, 1,830 or 31·1 per cent. their total annulment and the cases of 203 appellants were otherwise disposed of. Compared with 1925, the results on the whole were less favourable to appellants.

99. Compared with the figures of 1925, there was an increase in the number of criminal cases disposed of by magistrates in the mufassal and a decrease in the number disposed of by magistrates in the Presidency town. There was also an increase in the appellate and revisional work disposed of by magistrates, in the mufassal. In the courts of session there was a general decrease in the outturn of criminal work. In the High Court, there was also a general decrease in the criminal work disposed of. Eleven persons (3 each in Birbhum and Dacca, 2 in Tippera, 1 each in Dinajpur, Bogra and Noakhali) were under trial for offences against the State. Of these, 1 was acquitted, 8 convicted and 2 remained under trial at the close of the year. General.

100. After debiting, as usual, to the administration of criminal justice a portion of the salaries of judicial officers calculated according to the time which their returns show them to have devoted to it, the total charges for the year amounted to Rs. 39,17,317. Of this amount Rs. 21,02,890 were for the salaries of judicial officers, Rs. 1,90,549 for fixed and temporary copying establishments, Rs. 1,67,885 for process-servers, Rs. 7,20,159 for other establishments and Rs. 7,35,834 for contingencies and refunds. Receipts and charges.

The receipts amounted to Rs. 22,06,364. Of this amount Rs. 9,30,448 was under fines, Rs. 1,83,504 under process fees, Rs. 2,74,886 under copying and comparing fees, Rs. 7,27,918 under court-fee stamp receipts other than the above, and Rs. 89,608 was miscellaneous receipts. Compared with the figures of 1925, the receipts show an increase of over Rs. 1,17,000 and the charges an increase of over Rs. 1,31,000.

## Civil Justice.

[Report on the Administration of Civil Justice in the Presidency of Bengal during the year 1926.]

101. The permanent civil judicial staff employed in the Presidency during 1926 consisted of 15 High Court Judges, 21 District Judges, 10 Additional District Judges, one Chief Judge and six Judges of the Presidency Small Cause Court, two Provincial Small Cause Court Judges who exercised also the powers of a Subordinate Judge, 44 Subordinate Judges and 235 Munsifs. In addition four executive officers exercised the powers of a Subordinate Judge or Small Cause Court Judge and two the powers of a Munsif. Judicial staff.

There were also 12 temporary Additional District Judges, 7 temporary Subordinate Judges and two temporary Munsifs employed for varying periods in different districts.

Increase in the Cadre of District and Sessions Judges in Bengal.

102. The sanctioned staff of District Judges was unable to deal with the increased work in mufassal courts and it has been necessary for some years past to appoint, as occasion arose, temporary Additional District and Sessions Judges. In the absence of any provision for such posts in the permanent cadre of District and Sessions Judges, Government experienced considerable difficulty in filling them with suitable officers of required standing and accordingly decided that the immediate requirements of the Presidency would be met by the addition of three posts to the cadre of District and Sessions Judges. The sanction of the Secretary of State was obtained to this measure during the year under review and it was decided that two of the new appointments should be recruited from the Bar and the other from the Bengal Civil Service (Judicial).

## Original Jurisdiction.

### *I.—High Court.*

Original suits for disposal.

103. The total number of civil suits for disposal on the Original Side of the High Court in 1926 was 6,151, against 6,808 in the previous year.

Of 2,499 suits instituted during 1926, 1,706 were for money or moveable property, 251 were mortgage suits and 192 were for immoveable property.

The value of suits for specific money claims was Rs. 4,35,10,651 as compared with Rs. 4,38,06,345 in the previous year.

Original suits disposed of.

104. The number of suits decided in 1926 was 2,917, and the number remaining at the end of the year was 3,234, which was less than the number pending at the close of the previous year by 395. There were 1,831 suits pending over one year, showing a decrease of 1,454 on the figures of the previous year.

Probates and Letters of Administration, etc.

105. During the year, 477 petitions for probate and letters of administration, and 14,585 interlocutory applications were disposed of. Of the interlocutory applications, 9,493 were disposed of by the Court or by a Judge in Chambers and the remainder (5,092) by the Registrar and the Master.

Awards under the Indian Arbitration Act, 1899.

106. The number of awards filed and that of applications made in execution thereof were 293 and 233, respectively.

Appeals from the original jurisdiction.

107. The number of appeals pending from the previous year was 83 and 145 new appeals were preferred to the Appellate Side of the Court. Of the total number, 39 were dismissed for default

or otherwise not prosecuted, and 119 were decided on merit. Of the latter, the decrees of the Courts of first instance were affirmed in 86, modified in 7 and reversed in 23 cases; three cases were remanded for retrial. Seventy appeals remained undecided at the close of the year.

Insolvency cases.

108. The number of cases under the old and new Acts pending in the Insolvency Court at the commencement of the year was 163 and 1,519, respectively, and the number instituted during the year was 249. Of the 1,931 cases for disposal, 335 were decided, the adjudication being set aside or superseded or the petition being withdrawn or dismissed in 67 and the insolvents obtaining relief in 268 cases. Two thousand three hundred and eighty-seven applications of a miscellaneous character were also disposed of during the year.

Appeals to the Privy Council.

109. Three appeals from the Original Side were pending from the previous year, and eight appeals were admitted during the year. Of these, three were disposed of by the Privy Council and eight remained pending at the close of the year.

Financial results.

110. The following figures exhibit the financial results for the last three years, including under the head of expenditure the salaries of the Judges:—

| Year. | Receipts (*a*). | Receipts (*b*). | Expenditure. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. |
| 1924 .. .. .. .. | 22,27,246 | 9,58,407 | 7,60,892 |
| 1925 .. .. .. .. | 31,95,519 | 10,00,073 | 7,66,906 |
| 1926 .. .. .. | 20,01,801 | 8,96,174 | 7,44,573 |

(*a*) Including the duty raised on the grant of probate and letters of administration.
(*b*) Excluding the duty raised on the grant of probates and letters of administration.

*II.—Civil Courts in the Mufassal Subordinate to the High Court.*

Creation and abolition of Munsifs.

111. One Munsif's Court was opened and two abolished in the Faridpur district, one opened and one abolished in the Chittagong district, one opened in the Khulna district, and one abolished in the Bankura district.

Original suits instituted.

112. The number of suits instituted in 1926 was 574,415, a decrease of 11,081 on the figures of the previous year.

Local distribution.

113. There was a decrease in the number of suits instituted in all the districts except Faridpur, Khulna, Bakarganj, Chittagong, Burdwan, Murshidabad, Birbhum, Dinajpur and Rangpur. The decrease was most marked in Tippera, Mymensingh, Pabna-Bogra, Midnapore, Nadia and the 24-Parganas and occurred chiefly in money and rent suits.

The largest number of suits (53,886) was instituted in the district of Mymensingh where the number of money, rent and title suits (19,819, 26,469 and 7,598, respectively), was the heaviest in the province. In no other district did the institutions exceed 50,000.

Number of suits disposed of.

114. The number of suits disposed of was 579,513, a decrease of 14,447 on the figures of 1925.

Of the total number, 559,540 were disposed of by Munsifs, 13,277 by Subordinate Judges, 6,334 by Small Cause Court Judges, and 362 by District and Additional Judges. The figures show a decrease under all classes of courts except the Subordinate Judges.

Results of suits decided.

115. Of the suits disposed of during the year, 105,954 were decided without trial, 403,056 without contest, and 70,503 on contest.

Of the 70,503 suits decided on contest, 509 were disposed of on reference to arbitration. Of the remainder, 58,037 or 83 per cent. resulted in favour of the plaintiffs, and 11,957 or 17 per cent. in favour of the defendants.

Applications for retrial.

116. The number of applications for an order to set aside an *ex parte* judgment or a judgment on default, preferred during the year, was 21,955. Of these, 10,260 or 46·7 per cent. were successful.

Suits decided by Munsifs.

117. The number of suits disposed of by Munsifs fell from 574,555 to 559,540, a decrease of 15,015.

The average number of suits disposed of by each Munsif was 2,341 against 2,404 in 1925. Disposals under the Small Cause Court procedure formed 23·5 per cent. of the total.

Suits disposed of by Subordinate Judges.

118. The number of original suits disposed of by Subordinate Judges was 13,277, an increase of 1,182 on the figures of the previous year. The increase was in cases decided both under the ordinary and the Small Cause Court procedure, and was spread over both contested and uncontested suits. The number of suits decided under the ordinary procedure was 5,848 and under the Small Cause Court procedure 7,429; of these 27·4 per cent. and 14·3 per cent. respectively, were contested. The percentage of suits decided after contest both under the ordinary and the Small Cause Court procedure shows a decrease as compared with the previous year.

Suits disposed of by Small Cause Court Judges.

119. The provincial Small Cause Courts disposed of 6,334 original suits, of which 689 were contested or 15 less than in the previous year.

120. The number of suits pending at the close of the year was 186,214, against 179,744 in the previous year. The increase is chiefly due to smaller disposals during the year. Pending suits.

Of the pending suits, 14,617 had been pending for more than a year, 75,123 for more than six months and 41,761 for more than three months. The figures show a considerable increase in the arrears. Of the suits pending over one year, 10,214 were in the courts of Munsifs and 4,403 in the courts of District and Subordinate Judges, the figures showing an increase of 1,443 and 656, respectively, as compared with 1925. A large proportion of these suits (41·5) were, however, pending for final decree.

121. Excluding transfers, there were 107,858 miscellaneous cases of a Judicial nature before the courts for disposal, against 110,331 in the previous year. Of these, 85,487 were disposed of, 214 were treated as suits on their being contested, and 22,157 remained pending at the close of the year. Of the cases disposed of, 32,799 were decided without trial, 38,331 without contest and 14,357 on contest or on reference to arbitration. Of the pending cases 758 were pending over a year, Dacca being responsible for the largest number (198). Miscellaneous cases.

### *III.—Calcutta Small Cause Court.*

122. The number of suits instituted and decided in the Presidency Court of Small Causes during 1926 and the number pending at its close, were 20,921, 22,160 and 3,512, respectively. The number instituted, disposed of and pending shows a decrease of 2,971, 2,406 and 351, respectively. Fifty-nine applications were filed under section 626 of the Calcutta Municipal Act (Bengal Act III of 1899).

The decrease in institutions was spread over all classes of suits.

123. Of the suits disposed of, 1,006 were decided without trial, 16,998 without contest and 4,156 on contest or upon reference to arbitration. Mode of disposal.

Of the 3,512 suits pending at the close of the year, 943 were over three months old, against 902 in 1925.

## Appellate Jurisdiction.

### *I.—High Court.*

124. One hundred and forty-five appeals from decisions on the Original Side were filed during the year and 83 were pending at its commencement. Of the total, 158 were decided and 70 Appeals under section 15 of the Letters Patent.

remained pending at the close of the year. The number of appeals disposed of was 54 less than in 1925. On the Appellate Side, 59 such appeals were filed during the year and 36 were pending at its commencement. Of these, 61 were decided and 34 remained pending at the close of the year.

### *II.—Appeals from the Subordinate Civil Courts.*

Appeals to the High Court from subordinate courts.

125. The following statement shows the number of first and second appeals from the decrees and orders of the provincial courts of original and appellate jurisdiction, respectively, which came before the High Court and were decided during the year. The figures include appeals from the courts of Assam:—

| | Remaining at the close of 1925. | Brought before the Court in 1926. | Disposed of in 1926. | Remaining at the close of 1926. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FIRST APPEALS. | | | | |
| From original decrees .. | 513 | 222 | 326(*a*) | 409 |
| From original orders .. | 274 | 314 | 253 | 335 |
| From orders of the Commissioners under section 30 of Act VIII of 1923 .. .. .. | .... | 1 | 1 | .... |
| SECOND APPEALS. | | | | |
| From Appellate decrees .. | 3,911 | 2,743 | 2,671(*b*) | 3,983 |
| From appellate orders .. | 177 | 174 | 181 | 170 |
| Total .. | 4,875 | 3,454 | 3,432 | 4,897 |

(*a*) Including 34 will cases.
(*b*) of these, 163 were decided by a single Judge.

Results of appeals.

126. The following table shows the results of appeals decided by the High Court affecting District Judges, Subordinate Judges and Commissioners under section 30 of Act VIII of 1923:—

| | Affirmed. | | | Modified or reversed. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | District Judges. | Subordinate Judges. | Commissioners under section 30 of Act VIII of 1923. | District Judges. | Subordinate Judges. | Commissioners under section 30 of Act VIII of 1923. |
| Appeals from— | | | | | | |
| Orginal decrees .. | 74 | 100 | .... | 22 | 65 | .... |
| Appellate decrees .. | 498 | 557 | .... | 112 | 110 | .... |
| Miscellaneous appeals | 53 | 97 | .... | 37 | 37 | 1(*a*) |

(*a*) One case was reversed from orders of Commissioner under section 30 of Act VIII of 1923.

*III.—Appellate Courts Subordinate to the High Court.*

Appeals for disposal.

127. Excluding transfers, the number of appeals for disposal before the subordinate courts in Bengal in 1926 was 36,867 against 36,238 in 1925.

The number of appeals instituted during the year was 16,666 against 17,003 in the previous year. Of these, 7,633 were in title suits, 7,068 in rent suits and 1,965 in suits for money or moveables. The numbers show an increase in appeals in title suits but a decrease in rent and money suits.

Appeals disposed of.

128. The number of appeals decided was 15,575 which shows a decrease of 545 in the number decided by District and Additional Judges and of 408 in that decided by Subordinate Judges as compared with the previous year.

The decrease in disposals was spread over 10 districts and was largest in Jessore (644), followed by Chittagong (538), Midnapore (431) and Rangpur (380).

On the other hand, there was a noticeable increase in Rajshahi (435) which was due to the fact that two Additional Subordinate Judges worked for a greater part of the year.

Appeals pending.

129. The number of appeals pending at the close of the year was 21,292 and was more than that of 1925 by 1,582.

The number of appeals over one year old rose from 5,291 to 6,737. Noakhali was accountable for the largest number, viz., 1,744.

Results of appeals.

130. The results on the decision of the lower courts of the appeals decided during the year were as follows: In 8,299 cases, or 53·3 per cent. of the whole, the judgment of the lower courts was affirmed; in 2,087 cases, or 13·4 per cent., it was modified and in 2,403 cases, or 15·4 per cent., it was reversed. Seven hundred and fifty-nine, or 4·9 per cent. were remanded and 2,027, or 13 per cent. were either not prosecuted or dismissed for default. The results are more favourable to the lower courts than in the preceding year.

General.

131. There was a decrease in the institutions of original suits and appeals in the subordinate courts during the year, but the decrease in the number of suits and appeals disposed of being still larger, there was an increase in the pending file. The number of year-old suits and that of year-old appeals was larger than in the previous year. On the Appellate Side of the High Court, both the institutions and disposals were less than in the previous year, and there was an increase in the pending file.

Receipts and charges of the civil courts.

132. The receipts of the civil courts in Bengal and of the High Court amounted to Rs. 1,85,28,747, showing a decrease of Rs. 18,42,995 and the charges to Rs. 88,49,803, showing a decrease of Rs. 76,082, on those of 1925. Including the amount realised on account of duty on probate, etc.—

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| In the High Court .. .. .. .. | 10,35,591* |
| In other Courts .. .. .. .. | 1,98,598* |
| Total .. .. | 12,34,189 |

*The figures are for the financial year

the profit to Government from civil litigation amounted to Rs. 96,78,944: excluding this item, it amounted to Rs. 84,44,755.

Details of the receipts and charges are as follows:—

RECEIPTS.

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| In stamps— | |
| Process fees .. .. .. .. | 25,56,754 |
| Other fess .. .. .. .. | 1,48,12,363 |
| In cash or special stamps— | |
| Other receipts .. .. .. .. | 4,22,838 |
| Copying and comparing fees .. .. .. | 7,25,496 |
| Fines .. .. .. .. .. | 11,296 |
| Total .. .. | 1,85,28,747 |

CHARGES.

| | |
|---|---|
| Salaries of judicial officers .. .. .. | 33,04,059 |
| Establishment— | |
| Process-servers .. .. .. .. | 11,49,482 |
| Others .. .. .. .. | 29,90,115 |
| Copyists' fees .. .. .. .. | 5,43,067 |
| Contingencies and refunds .. .. .. | 8,63,080 |
| Total .. .. | 88,49,803 |

There was a decrease in receipts under all heads except "Fines" and "Copying and comparing fees." Under the head "Other fees" the decrease amounted to more than Rs. 17,00,000. The decrease in expenditure was under all heads except "Establishment" and "Contingencies and refunds" and was most marked under the head "Salaries of judicial officers" which was Rs. 1,51,000 less than the previous year.

## Jails.

[The Report on the Administration of the Jail Department in the Presidency of Bengal for the year 1926.]

Jail population, health and mortality of prisoners.

133. There was a small increase in the total number of prisoners detained in the jails of Bengal during the year under report, which was mainly due to the communal riots in Calcutta, Dacca and Pabna, and also to the influx of Satyagrahi prisoners in the Patuakhali sub-jail. The average daily population was 12,772. There has been a gradual fall since the year 1920 when the number was 15,357. The average number of female and European prisoners remained almost stationary.

There was improvement in health during the year under report. The daily average of sickness fell to 31·21 per thousand, while the death-rate was only 13·7 per thousand. Dysentery, which was at one time a serious blot on the administration of the Bengal jails, has been almost eradicated by improved drinking water supplies and other hygienic measures.

Jail expenditure.

134. Though dietary charges increased from Rs. 9,23,000 to Rs. 9,52,000 on account of the larger population and some rise in the price of food grains, the total cost of maintaining and guarding the prisoners fell from Rs. 24,39,000 to Rs. 23,82,000 owing to economies in other directions.

Jail earnings.

135. The total earnings of the manufacturing department were Rs. 6,03,300 against Rs. 6,49,500 in the previous year. The percentage of prisoners employed in manufacture fell to 42·56 per cent., and the average earning of prisoners dropped from Rs. 67-13 to Rs. 62-13.

Visitors.

136. The Boards of Visitors, and particularly the lady visitors of the Presidency Jail, continued to do useful work. They have taken a keen interest in jail administration and have helped the Inspector-General and Government with many constructive suggestions.

Advisory Boards.

137. Advisory Boards sat twice at each of the Central Jails to consider the premature release of deserving prisoners. They recommended release in 86 cases out of 176 cases placed before them and Government finally accepted their recommendations in all but 9 cases.

Juvenile Offenders.

138. A reformatory school under the Bengal Children's Act of 1922 was established in a portion of the Juvenile Jail, Alipore, from 1st July, 1926. This is an important step towards the improvement of existing methods of dealing with juvenile

offenders. Too many children and young persons are still sent to prison and it is a matter of regret that the number of children and young persons thus sentenced during the year rose from 58 to 95.

**Short sentences.**

139. The futility of short sentences is now generally recognised and it is satisfactory to note that there was some diminution in the percentage of prisoners with sentences of one month or less.

**Under-trial prisoners.**

140. There was an improvement in the average period of detention of under-trial prisoners in sessions cases. On the other hand, there has been a slight rise in the average period in magistrates' courts, especially in Dacca, Mymensingh and Bakarganj.

**Escapes.**

141. During the year 36 prisoners including under-trials escaped, against 19 escapes reported last year. The number of escapes indicates a lack of efficiency in the warder staff.

**Jail reforms.**

142. The most important reform of the year has already been mentioned, namely, the organisation of a reformatory school for juvenile offenders below the age of 16 in the Juvenile Jail at Alipore. For the year 1927 the most important reforms will be (*1*) the opening of the Borstal school at Bankura to deal with offenders between the ages of 16 and 21, and (*2*) the establishment at Alipore of an industrial school for child offenders under the Bengal Children's Act, 1922. The reformatory and industrial schools will be handed over to the Education Department for management. Primary education for selected prisoners is being tried as an experiment in the Alipore Central Jail. The experiment is likely to be successful and good results have already been achieved.

**Jail Enquiry Committee.**

143. The preliminary inquiries which were instituted in connection with the cruel murder of Rai Bhupendra Nath Chatterji Bahadur, Superintendent of Police, Bengal Criminal Investigation Department, within the Alipore Central Jail by the political prisoners, led to serious reflections on the efficiency of the staff in this important jail. In consequence the Bengal Jails Inquiry Committee was appointed, under the presidentship of the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Pearson of the Calcutta High Court, to inquire into the state of discipline in all the central and district jails, the efficiency of the subordinate staff, and the adequacy of the supervision.

The report of this Committee was published on 21st April, 1927.

## Registration.

[Statistical Returns of the Registration Department in the Presidency of Bengal for the year 1926.]

Progress and statistics of 1926.

144. The number of offices open at the end of the year was 413 against 408 at the end of 1925. Five experimental offices were opened during the year.

The total income of the department rose from Rs. 34,09,994 in 1925 to Rs. 39,19,735 in 1926, *i.e.*, by 14·9 per cent. The increase was mainly due to the increased rates of registration fees which were in force during the whole of 1926, instead of for only the last seven months, as in the preceding year. The total expenditure increased from Rs. 17,75,394 in 1925 to Rs. 17,95,188 in 1926, *i.e.*, by 1·1 per cent. This slight increase was due to the increment of pay of Sub-Registrars and their establishment under the time-scale of pay, and also to additional expenditure on extra copying establishment to ensure the speedy completion and delivery of documents.

Results.

145. The outstanding feature of the working of the Indian Registration Act was the decrease in registrations which fell from 1,994,025 in 1925 to 1,904,090 in 1926, *i.e.*, by 4·5 per cent. The decrease was shared by all the districts in the Province except Midnapore, Birbhum and Bankura in the Burdwan Division, Murshidabad and the 24-Parganas in the Presidency Division and Bakarganj in the Dacca Division. The decrease was the largest in the Dacca Division where it was as much as 10·6 per cent. The decrease in Rajshahi and Chittagong Divisions was 5·5 per cent. in each case. The decrease in Calcutta was 3·9 per cent. It was ascribed by the Registrar to the general depression in trade, tightness in the money-market and the adverse economic conditions prevailing during 1926.

Working of the Marriage Act III of 1872.

146. Under the special Marriage Act III of 1872, 55 marriages were registered during the year 1926, against 44 in 1925. Out of these, 45 were registered in Calcutta, 4 in Dacca, 2 in Darjeeling and 1 each in Howrah, Midnapore, Birbhum and Chittagong. At the end of the year 1926, there were 44 Marriage Registrars including 28 *ex-officio* Registrars against 45 in the preceding year. Of these Marriage Registrars only 10 registered marriages during the year.

Working of the Muhammadan Registration Act and the Kazis' Act.

147. The number of offices at the end of the year 1926 was 348 against 346 at the close of the preceding year. The total number of ceremonies, *viz.*, marriages and divorces registered during the year was 106,148 against 91,018 in 1925, showing an increase of 16·6 per cent. The total receipts including gratuities of Muhammadan Registrars amounted to Rs. 2,24,320-9-6 in the year 1926,

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against Rs. 1,88,428-0-6, during 1925 showing an increase of 19 per cent. This marked increase in the number of registrations as well as in the amount of receipts may be attributed to a growing appreciation of the benefits of registration under the Act.

[Annual Report of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, Bengal, on the working of the Indian Companies Act, and Allied Acts during 1926-27.]

Working of the Indian Companies Act, 1913 (VII of 1913).

148. At the close of the year under report there were in operation in Bengal 3,040 companies limited by shares, with a total nominal capital of Rs. 3,39,00,64,094 and a paid up capital of Rs. 1,17,71,68,084 as compared with 2,810 companies with Rs. 3,37,23,39,574 nominal, and Rs. 1,18,16,94,591 paid up capital, at the end of the previous year. Three hundred and nine new companies and societies, or 36 more than the number incorporated in 1925-26 were registered, of which 276 were limited by shares, 6 were limited by guarantee, and 27, representing various social, philanthropic and charitable objects, were incorporated under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. Four hundred and thirteen companies increased while 73 companies reduced their capital during the year, against 459 and 73, respectively, in the previous year. Forty-seven companies ceased to work, went into liquidation, were finally dissolved or otherwise became defunct, as compared with 70 companies in 1925-26. Fifty-nine companies went into liquidation during the year, but were not finally dissolved.

No investigation into the internal affairs of a company was directed under section 138 of the Act during 1926-27 but the practice of appealing to the Registrar to interfere in the internal affairs of companies continued.

One hundred and forty-nine prosecutions were instituted during the year and eight were pending from the preceding year. Of these 69 ended in conviction, 34 were withdrawn or otherwise disposed of and 54 remained pending at the close of the year.

The net receipts of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies from all sources aggregated Rs. 75,730 against Rs. 75,468 in 1925-26.

Working of the Provident Insurance Societies Act, 1912 (V of 1912).

149. One new society was registered under the Provident Insurance Societies Act, 1912, during the year, thus increasing the total number of existing societies to seven.

Four permanent unrestricted Auditors' Certificates were granted during the year under the provisions of section 144 of the Act and the rules relating thereto, the recipients being the holders of the Government Diploma in Accountancy of the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics, Bombay.

## Municipal and Local Self-Government Departments.

### Municipalities outside Calcutta.

[Reports from the Commissioners of Divisions on the working of Municipalities in the Bengal Presidency (except Calcutta) during the year 1926-27..]

Number of Municipalities.

150. The number of municipalities was the same, *viz.*, 115 as in the preceding year. A new municipality was established at Gauripur in the Sadar subdivision of the Mymensingh district with effect from 1st January, 1927, but the municipal board was not formed before the close of the financial year. The boundaries of the Rajbari Municipality were revised by the exclusion of rural areas, and the municipality is now more compact. There were also alterations in the boundaries of four other municipalities, *viz.*, Krishnagar, Patuakhali, Chittagong and Kurseong.

Elections.

151. General elections were held in 12 municipalities and most of the seats were hotly contested. In the small town of Taki about 84 per cent. of the voters attended the polling station, and the contest in Naihati for 5 wards out of 6 was so keen that police arrangements had to be made to maintain order. The general election due at Patuakhali could not be held during the year pending the question of exclusion of a portion of the municipal area and redistribution of wards. Civil suits were instituted in no fewer than 6 municipalities, *viz.*, Katwa-Narayanganj, Chittagong, Noakhali, Chandpur and Pabna and fresh elections had to be held in Narayanganj and in ward No. II of the Katwa Municipality as the original elections were declared void by the Civil Court.

The appeal preferred before the High Court against the decision of the Additional District Judge of Dacca, upholding the legality of the election of the Dacca Municipality held in March, 1925, has been decided in favour of the municipality.

Meetings.

152. Out of 2,334 meetings held during the year 152 proved abortive for want of a quorum and 233 were adjourned against 153 and 199, respectively, in the preceding year. The failure was most marked at Ghatal, Kotechandpur and Bhola where 7 out of 29, 8 out of 26 and 14 out of 28 meetings respectively proved abortive. At Budge-Budge and Maheshpur nearly half, and at Baduria, Basirhat and Santipur more than one-third, of the meetings held were unsuccessful. Sherpur and Tollygunge held the largest number of meetings, *viz.*, 48 and 38 respectively. On the other hand the Commissioners of Dainhat, Midnapore, Ramjibanpur, Kanchrapara, Gobardanga, Meherpur, Satkhira and Narayanganj failed to meet once a month. The average percentage of attendance was highest in Tamluk (83·3) and lowest in Bhola (33·1).

Number of rate-payers.

153. The total number of rate-payers rose from 321,819 to 324,917, the percentage to total population being 16·11. The percentage was highest in Kumarkhali (42·6) and lowest in Titagarh (3·2), a mill town with a large cooly population. There was an appreciable increase in the number of rate-payers in Chittagong, due to the inclusion of certain areas within the municipal limits. Other towns in which rates are paid by less than one-tenth of the population are the riparian mill municipalities—Naihati, Bhatpara, Garulia, Budge-Budge and Narayanganj, towns with a floating population of factory operatives who pay no rates themselves.

Assessment and taxation.

154. The average incidence of taxation per head of population rose from Rs. 3-1-5 to Rs. 3-3-9. It was highest in the hill municipality of Darjeeling (Rs. 10-11-1). Next come Kurseong (Rs. 9-0-5) another hill municipality—Howrah (Rs. 9-0-5) and Chittagong (Rs. 5-7-1). In nine other towns, *viz.*, Burdwan, Hooghly Chinsurah, Krishnagar, Berhampore, Jessore, Dacca, Narayanganj, Mymensingh and Uttarpara the incidence was above Rs. 4. In the last named town the comparatively high figure is due to the imposition of lighting rate (electric light) at 1½ per cent. on the annual value of holdings, which has increased the municipal income by more than Rs. 2,000 per annum. In Debhata and Bajitpur the ratio is as low as 6½ annas and 7¼ annas and in 22 municipalities it is from 8 annas to one rupee. Generally speaking, the incidence of municipal taxation in the Presidency as a whole is low but this is due partly to the inclusion in the list of municipalities of many places which are more rural than urban. Income from municipal rates and taxes has however risen from Rs. 60⅝ lakhs in 1924-25 to more than Rs. 64⅓ lakhs.

A general or partial revision of assessment was made in 85 municipalities. The revision effected an increase of Rs. 1,20,470 in the municipal demand of the Presidency as a whole. The largest increase, *viz.*, Rs. 17,551 was obtained in the South Suburban Municipality. Chittagong also got an annual increase of Rs. 12,200 by extending its limits. On the other hand Asansol suffered a loss of Rs. 9,467 owing to an amicable settlement with the East Indian Railway with regard to the assessment of railway holdings and to the reduction in the scale of latrine fees and South Dum-Dum Rs. 3,370 partly from the reduction of percentage of house tax on Government and public buildings and partly from the diminution of the value of holdings owing to the abolition of the Ammunition Factory and withdrawal of the military garrison from Dum-Dum.

Collections.

155. The total collections for the Presidency as a whole rose from Rs. 60¼ lakhs to Rs. 62⅞ lakhs, the percentage of collections on the current demand also rising from 94·3 to 95·6. The collections were very satisfactory in 22 municipalities where the realisation was either equal to or in excess of the current demand and in

6 others they were over 99 per cent. On the other hand, the ratio was under 80 per cent.—a deplorably low figure—in 5 towns, falling as low as 74·1 per cent. in South Dum-Dum. This unsatisfactory result in South Dum-Dum is due to non-realisation of taxes from several sources such as the Eastern Bengal Railway, Messrs. Jessop and Company and the Military and Public Works Departments of Government. As in the previous year Garulia collected cent. per cent. of the demand without any remission. Nalchiti also did the same with a remission of Rs. 9 only. Titagarh and Champdany also collected practically their whole demand granting less than one-half per cent. remission and leaving no outstanding balances. In these towns, however, the bulk of the taxes is paid by the mills leaving a small percentage to be collected in the ordinary way.

The total remissions, both arrear and current, for the Province as a whole amounted to Rs. 2,57,082 and represented 3·9 per cent. of the current demand. The small municipalities of Debhatta and Berhampore remitted nearly one-third of their current demands; Bhadreswar and Rajbari more than 20 per cent. while four others, *viz.*, Tollygunj, Jainagar, Katwa and Pabna remitted more than 12 per cent. Except in the case of Bhadreswar where it is stated that at the last general revision a large remission was granted by the Appeal Committee, no explanations have been given for the large remissions in other towns, but they are not far to seek. Large remissions are the logical sequence of careless and illegal assessment, inefficient collection and reluctance to enforce the summary procedure provided in the Bengal Municipal Act.

The following are examples of the glaring instances of irregular remissions granted by the Municipal Commissioners which were noticed by the Examiner of Local Accounts in his report on the working of the Local Audit Department during the year 1925-26:—

(*i*) Latrine tax was remitted on the ground of poverty in Jalpaiguri, Midnapore, Vishnupur and Suri Municipalities.

(*ii*) In Jalpaiguri remissions were given for vacant and demolished holdings not on the report of the ward commissioners after personal enquiry, but simply on the report of the tax-daroga.

(*iii*) In Katwa and Bankura vacancy remissions were granted with retrospective effect although no notice of vacancy under section 110 of the Bengal Municipal Act was received and in Barrackpore remissions were granted on the report of the collecting sarkars though the owners had not sent in notices of vacancy.

(*iv*) In Midnapore valuations of holdings were reduced during the currency of assessment and again for a second time against the decision of the Appeal Committee.

(*v*) In Jangipur latrine taxes were remitted when the holding was not in good order, taxes were remitted when the occupants left the place on transfer and full remission of the latrine taxes was given for vacant holdings.

(*vi*) In Natore remission was given for voluntary demolition of buildings.

The balances outstanding at the close of the year rose from Rs. 14¾ lakhs to nearly Rs. 15¼ lakhs of which Howrah alone was responsible for more than Rs. 5½ lakhs. Other municipalities which had unduly large balances outstanding were Dacca, Mymensingh, Bally, Hooghly-Chinsurah, Barisal, Santipur, Tollygunge, Bankura, South Dum-Dum and Sirajganj. The reason for the heavy balance in South Dum-Dum has already been stated. In Dacca the riots after the *Janmastami* procession unfortunately caused a temporary set back. However the collections were Rs. 4,88,380 as against Rs. 3,81,435 in the previous year. The Commissioner observes, "Provided that the appeal against the assessment now before the Privy Council is unsuccessful, there are good prospects of improvement in its financial position." There was also a decided improvement in the total collection in Bally which amounted to Rs. 75,026 as against Rs. 53,289 in the preceding year. "They would have improved further but the adoption of a definite and progressive policy is hampered by the existence of party factions, and by the fact that the Municipal Commissioners have practically spilt up the municipality into two separate municipalities by delegating almost autonomous powers to the two ward committees under section 53 of the Bengal Municipal Act and leaving little power of administrative control and co-ordination with the Chairman as representing the central body."

The poor collection in Santipur was due to party faction. As regards the collection in Hooghly-Chinsurah the Magistrate writes "that the present Board claims to have made a very determined effort to collect arrears but their success has been little, if anything better than that of their predecessors." In other cases no explanation has been given but generally speaking the heavy arrears are due to laxity on the part of the municipal executive in taking legal steps for the realisation of taxes, as provided in the Act. The District Magistrate makes the following observations with regard to the Bankura Municipality:—

"The Bankura Municipality in which there was an outstanding balance of over Rs. 22,000 took little coercive steps to realise arrears

and the Commissioners seem rather afraid to adopt the summary procedure allowed under the Act, evidently not to displease their constituencies. They like to take recourse to civil suits and although they obtained decrees for Rs. 5,644 for arrears outstanding on 30th June, 1926, a sum of Rs. 4,056 remained unsatisfied on the 31st March, 1927. The municipality also seems anxious to dispose of land by sale for the sake of revenue rather than make a real attempt to realise outstanding balances."

During the year Government in the Local Self-Government Department invited the attention of all municipalities to the following remarks made by Mr. Blandy, Magistrate of Bakarganj :—

"Government will have some justification in looking askance at requests for financial assistance as long as the Commissioners persist in refusing to look facts in the face and make no serious attempt to realise the very large sum which they have allowed to fall into arrears."

The Examiner of Local Accounts has again brought to the notice of Government that in Mymensingh, Dacca, Serampore, Rangpur, Burdwan, Bankura, Dinajpur, Santipur and a few other municipalities several Commissioners and in one instance the Chairman himself took advantage of their position and did not pay their taxes promptly. The effect that such an example is likely to have on the general body of rate-payers is obvious. It has been suggested that the Bombay practice might be followed with advantage, namely, the publication of the names of municipal Commissioners who are themselves in arrear. It is possible that thereby Municipal Commissioners might be deterred from falling into arrears. But Government in the ministry of Local Self-Government consider that in a matter of this kind responsibility lies not with Government but with the electors. It is for the latter to keep themselves informed of the conduct of their representatives and to refuse their votes to those who show so deplorable a lack of the civic spirit.

**Income and expenditure.**

156. The total receipts including opening balance rose from Rs. 1,06,64,253 to Rs. 1,12,17,720. The total disbursements were Rs. 96,50,331 as against Rs. 88,72,440 in the year 1925-26.

**Closing balance.**

157. The total balance at the close of the year amounted to nearly Rs. 16,00,000, as against Rs. 18,00,000. The largest balances were held by Dacca (Rs. 2,24,810), Howrah (Rs. 1,72,250), Darjeeling (Rs. 79,978) and Bhatpara (Rs. 59,556). The large balance in Dacca includes uncashed cheques for Rs. 55,695 and the unspent balance Rs. 33,203 of the Government grant for the sewerage scheme. So the actual closing balance was Rs. 1,35,912. No explanations have been furnished for the large balances held

by Howrah and Darjeeling. In the latter case, however, the figure includes Rs. 22,129 on account of deposits. The major portion of the balance of Bhatpara represents funds for sewerage and water-supply schemes. On the other hand a number of municipalities failed to keep adequate working balances and in several instances these were insufficient to meet outstanding liabilities. The closing balance of Debhatta was as small as Rs. 111 but it had no liability. In Sirajgunj, Madaripur, Jamalpur and Jiaganj-Azimganj the outstanding liabilities largely exceeded the closing balance. The greatest offenders in this respect were Bhola and Barasat which had outstanding liabilities of Rs. 2,718 and Rs. 4,186 respectively, against actual balances of Rs. 90 and Rs. 157 only, and Mymensingh and Hooghly-Chinsura which closed the year with balances of Rs. 9,885 and Rs. 11,647 but each with liabilities exceeding Rs. 46,000. Bankura and Jhalakati had also outstanding liabilities of Rs. 9,124 and 5,685 against cash balances of Rs. 969 and 735 only.

**Education.**

158. The total amount spent on education including the Government grant of Rs. 87,405 rose from Rs. 3,81,324 to Rs. 4,46,699 and represented 5·3 per cent. of the municipal income. The expenditure on primary education also showed a corresponding increase of Rs. 42,000 which is contributed by all the Divisions except Dacca and Rajshahi. The increase was most marked in Asansol where the expenditure rose from Rs. 10,160 to Rs. 32,088 and is attributed to the construction of three primary school buildings during the year. Twenty municipalities or roughly one in six failed to spend 3·2 per cent. of their ordinary income on education, the percentage which is taken to represent the amount required for the education of half the number of boys of primary school-going age. On the other hand, the ratio was over 5 per cent. in 62 municipalities and over 10 per cent. in twenty.

The Municipal Commissioners of Madaripur started 3 more primary schools on Mr. Biss's model making a total of 10 such schools for boys and also started a free primary school for girls. The recurring cost was estimated at Rs. 5,000 a year of which Government sanctioned Rs. 2,088. A system of free voluntary primary education was introduced by the Comilla Municipality and the local Giridhari primary school was converted into a free school. The Commissioners of the Gurulia Municipality accepted Mr. Biss's scheme of free primary education and decided to impose a nominal education cess at ½ per cent. to meet half the required expenses. On the other hand, Rangpur took a most retrogade step in resolving to abolish the educational cess from 1st April, 1928.

In Berhampore, where also the Municipal Commissioners decided to levy an education cess, a primary school building was

constructed at Kassimbazar and a new middle English school for girls was started during the year.

A sum of Rs. 2,000 was paid by the Burdwan Municipality to the municipal High English school for vocational training and Rs. 5,500 was kept earmarked for a middle English school for girls. The total expenditure of the Chittagong Municipality on education during the year amounted to Rs. 42,169. Of this Rs. 26,962 was spent on the upkeep of a High English school and Rs. 12,347 on primary education while the balance represented the amount of contribution to other educational institutions. The system of free voluntary primary education on the model of Mr. Biss's scheme introduced in this municipality proved a success. The introduction of free compulsory primary education is at present under the contemplation of the Municipal Commissioners. With regard to the Educational expenditure of this municipality the Divisional Commissioner remarks :—

" The Board deserves credit for its zeal for the cause of education but possibly its efforts in this field have resulted in neglect of even more necessary services."

The Minister in charge of the department has expressed his agreement with the Commissioner's view that the Municipal Commissioners should not spend too large an amount on secondary education when this involves neglect of other important services including primary instruction.

Water-supply.

159. Excluding Tollygunge and South Suburban which, as usual, were supplied with filtered water from the Calcutta mains and seven mill municipalities which got their supply from the local mill filters there were 29 municipalities which have their own water-works. The Raniganj water-works were practically completed and water-rate was levied from the second quarter of the year. The Suri water-works are likely to be completed soon. In Naihati pipe-water was, as before, supplied by the Gouripur and Nuddea Companies. The larger scheme for a comprehensive supply to remote corners of the town has been taken up. No improvement has been possible in the supply of filtered water in Baranagore, on account of the limited supply received from the Baranagore Jute Factory Company. The municipality has however improved water-supply in some localities by means of deep tube-wells. The Panihati Anti-malarial Society is installing a water-supply in certain wards of the town with pipe lines from tube-wells, and the proposal that the municipality should take it over was under consideration. The scheme for the extension of water-supply on the east side of the river Lakshya in Narayanganj was sanctioned. Rajbari incurred an expenditure of Rs. 3,850 in extending its pipe line, in putting

in three new hydrants, in sinking a tube-well and in purchasing a new engine for the water-works. A scheme for the improvement of the water-supply in the town of Faridpur was sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 1,53,500 towards which Government promised a contribution of Rs. 53,100 and a loan of Rs. 40,000. The experimental boring of a tube-well as a part of the scheme for the supply of water to the northern section of the town of Chandpur having proved unsuccessful, the Municipal Commissioners have under consideration a scheme for obtaining water from the Meghna river. As the water supplied through pipes from the Sonapur tank in Noakhali gives an offensive odour and is unfit for human consumption, the Municipal Commissioners are examining an alternative scheme. The machinery of the Comilla water-works went out of order and the supply of water stopped altogether from the beginning of April, 1927. To provide a temporary supply one pump was repaired and a new engine was ordered. There was also a breakdown in the Krishnagar water-works in April, 1926, which resulted in the complete stoppage of water-supply for a week.

Municipalities, including even those in which filtered water-supply from pipes is provided, appear to be convinced of the usefulness of tube-wells as an original or supplementary source of supply, and are increasing the number of such wells. Thus Jessore is now being supplied with tube-well water instead of filtered tank water. Five deep tube-wells were sunk in Rangpur and four in South Dum-Dum. Tube-wells were also sunk in Ranaghat, Kumarkhali, Barrackpore and Basirhat. Birnagar with its "Palli Mandali" continues to keep its tube-wells in order and carefully looks after the reserved tanks. On the other hand some municipalities have done nothing: Nabadwip, the great pilgrimage centre, has no filtered water-supply and incurred no expenditure under this head.

Conservancy.

160. The expenditure under this head amounted to Rs. 22 lakhs showing an increase of more than Rs. 1½ lakhs. This large increase, which was shared by all the Divisions except Rajshahi and Chittagong, was due to various causes (*e.g.*, acquisition of land for new trenching grounds, construction of *methars'* sheds, purchase of conservancy tools and implements, and increase in the number and pay of the conservancy staff). In Dacca, where the expenditure rose from Rs. 1,44,000 to Rs. 1,69,000, the increase was due to the payment of outstanding bills of the previous year. The increase of Rs. 3,072 in Mymensingh was due to the purchase of a motor-lorry for road watering which has proved a success. A motor-lorry was purchased by Kusthia also for carrying night-soil to the trenching ground. The Municipal Commissioners of Asansol propose to provide quarters for their sweepers and land is being acquired for the purpose. It is reported that this will enable the

municipality to recruit sweepers from outside to supplement the local sweepers who are not only inadequate in number but at times refractory. As usual, the conservancy charges were nearly Rs. 5 lakhs in excess of the receipts from latrine fees which rose by only Rs. 82,000. The examiners' report on the working of the Local Audit Department for the year 1925-26 shows that in no less than 29 municipalities the latrine fund closed with a debit balance. The deficit exceeds Rs. 5,000 in Burdwan, Hooghly-Chinsura, Rishra-Konnagar, Bally, Dacca and Comilla. All deficiencies were naturally made good out of the general fund. It is to be remembered that such calls on the general fund lead to a corresponding reduction in the amount available for expenditure on such vital services as Sanitation, Education and Medical. The Minister has therefore impressed upon the Municipal Commissioners the importance of making each of the special funds (latrine, water service) self-supporting by raising the rates to the maximum permissible figure where they have not yet reached that level or by reducing the recurring charges. In several towns the problem of obtaining sweepers for conservancy is as acute as ever and some of the bigger municipalities are understaffed. Mr. Donovan, Magistrate of Hooghly, writes:—

"The filthy state of the town of Hooghly-Chinsura is not unconnected with the fact that the sweepers are underfed and badly housed. In the neighbouring mills the sweepers get double the pay they get from the municipality so only the weaker and less efficient men come to work under the municipality."

And Mr. Durno, Magistrate of Nadia, observes:—

"These people are brought from Bihar and the Central Provinces but there are not nearly enough of them for the jobs. Krishnagar is understaffed in this respect but failed to recruit any more sweepers. At Santipur there are only 73 sweepers for 138 jobs; jobs are doubled and so the pay of each man is doubled: with an inadequate number of sweepers the rate-payers find the work done very inadequate and complaints are numerous. The municipality is so alarmed at the prospect of losing any of its sweepers that it keeps a hold on them by paying them their wages half a month after they have been earned; the sweepers naturally grumble at this and perform their work still more perfunctorily. .....Birnagar, Chakdah and Meherpur employ one sweeper each."

It appears possible that some municipalities would be better off with a smaller number of sweepers paid at high rates.

Supervision of the Conservancy Departments is one of the most important duties of Health Officers and Sanitary Inspectors, where

such are entertained. The total charges on account of these officers amounted to Rs. 1,80,685 against Rs. 1,63,135 in the preceding year.

**Drainage.**

161. Out of the total capital expenditure of Rs. 3,53,461 under this head, Dacca alone contributed Rs. 2,56,055, the major portion of which was on account of its sewerage scheme. The total amount paid by Government for the Dacca sewerage scheme is Rs. 25,00,740 out of which Rs. 21,37,100 has been transferred to the Public Health Department while Rs. 3,30,437 has been spent on the acquisition of land, leaving an unspent balance of Rs. 33,203 of the grant on the 31st March, 1927. The Bhatpara sewerage and watersupply scheme has now materialised and will shortly be sanctioned by Government. A free gift of land for the sewerage scheme was expected from a private donor, but as this was not realised, the scheme had to be revised and the estimate of cost has increased from Rs. 18 lakhs to Rs. 21 lakhs out of which, one-third, *viz.*, Rs. 7 lakhs will be contributed by Government. The mill authorities have contributed generally towards this scheme and the Bhatpara Municipality has resolved to take a loan of Rs. 75,000 from Government. About three years will be required for the completion of the scheme. The partial drainage scheme of the Suri Municipality at an estimated cost of Rs. 30,000 received the administrative approval of Government. It is reported that the septic tanks at Kurseong are working satisfactorily.

Minor drainage works were carried out in several municipalities. These are generally confined to construction of, and repairs to, culverts, etc.

**Public health.**

162. As in the previous year, almost all the municipalities took steps to improve sanitation by filling up, clearing or disinfecting insanitary tanks ditches and *dobas* and by removing undergrowth and obnoxious vegetation. The Champdany Municipality cleared more than half of its area of jungle by employing special gangs of coolies. The roadside lands in this municipality and in Uttarpara were cleared periodically by the municipal coolies. In Bhatpara some 8 bighas of low lands were reclaimed and in Gurulia low-lands and pits were filled up with coal cinders. Similar measures were also taken by several other municipalites. In North Dum-Dum as a result of the propaganda of the local Public Health Societies the people themselves attended to their own insanitary tanks. Three new tanks were excavated at Sherpur (Mymensingh) by private individuals.

Notices were issued in a certain number of municipalities upon owners for the clearance of insanitary tanks, *dobas*, and rank vegetation but Municipal Commissioners did not always insist on

full compliance with the terms of the notices. Mr. Donovan, District Magistrate of Hooghly, remarks:—

"I think the municipalities do not properly exercise their powers under the law in respect of sanitation. Hundreds of notices under sections 195, 200 and 224 and other sections of the Bengal Municipal Act are issued and the returns show that most of these notices were complied with. But the places themselves show that these notices are never complied with. The fact of the matter appears to be that the standards of the municipalities are low and I fear that in many an unreal compliance is too readily accepted as real."

Preventive measures were taken by a large number of municipalities to check the spread of epidemics. Medicines and disinfectants were freely distributed, tanks were reserved and special doctors appointed, where necessary. Cholera and small-pox broke out in several municipalities. People were warned against using the water of suspected tanks and wells, and advised to use boiled water; unwholesome food was kept out of the municipal market and inoculation with cholera vaccine was resorted to in some towns. In certain cases the Director of Public Health arranged for a regular supply of lymph and anti-cholera vaccine and also deputed qualified doctors. The Mines Board of Health materially helped the Asansol Municipality in preventing epidemic diseases.

Free vaccination was provided by many municipalities and effective measures were taken to secure the vaccination and revaccination of children. Vaccination depots were opened and permanent vaccinators were employed by some municipalities for the purpose. In Noakhali one temporary woman vaccinator was appointed to attend to *pardanashin* females.

Malaria and kala-azar were prevalent in some municipalities. It is reported that some anti-malarial and kala-azar societies did useful work in co-operation with municipalities in combating these diseases. In many towns quinine and cinchona febrifuge were freely distributed. Free Kala-azar Centres were maintained by a number of municipalities. There were Health Exhibitions and Baby Shows in several places during the year under report. The Dacca Municipality contributes Rs. 1,200 annually to the Dacca Maternity and Child-Welfare Trust and the Chittagong Municipality makes a yearly contribution of Rs. 500 to the maternity fund which is managed by a committee of which the Civil Surgeon is Secretary. A midwife is maintained from this fund who has to attend all delivery cases amongst the poorer sections of rate-payers free of charge. Government contributed Rs. 300 to this municipality for opening a class for the training of indigenous *dhais*, and twenty were trained during the year.

Increasing interest was displayed by some municipalities in examining foodstuffs offered for sale to the public. In Dacca for instance, 393 samples of different kinds of foodstuffs were sent up for analysis, of which nearly 38 per cent. was found to be adulterated. Prosecutions under the Bengal Food Adulteration Act were instituted in 135 cases of which 75 ended in conviction. Four hundred and thirty-nine maunds of different kinds of unwholesome foodstuffs were destroyed by this municipality.

Measures were taken by certain municipalities to eradicate water-hyacinth. Thus, notices were issued by Baranagar, South Dum-Dum, Rajshahi, Rangpur and Pabna upon the owners of tanks and insanitary pits for the eradication of water-hyacinth and it is reported that they were complied with. In Nator the two branches of the Nator Raj, who are the owners of the large *dighis* of the town, placed funds at the disposal of the municipality to clear the water-hyacinth. The municipality took up the work and finished it successfully. The Bagjola *khal* was cleared of water-hyacinth by the Irrigation Department. Both Jessore and Kotchandpur spent money for the removal of the pest from the river Bhairab within their jurisdiction.

**Public Works.**

163. The total expenditure under this head rose from Rs. 10,87,101 to Rs. 11,84,052. The increase was noticeable under the sub-head "Roads," and Dacca alone was responsible for an increase of Rs. 23,978 due to the payment of a large number of outstanding bills of the previous year. There was also an increase of Rs. 17,854 in Tollygunge due to the payment of arrear bills as well as to the repairing of several roads. The percentage of outlay on public works to the total expenditure varied from 1·3 in Jangipur to 41·3 in the small town of Meherpur.

The total length of metalled roads maintained by municipalities was 1,306 miles and that of unmetalled roads 1,577 miles. As is to be expected, the mileage of metalled roads is largest (72) in Howrah while Krishnagar has the greatest mileage of unmetalled roads (77).

Complaints continue to be received regarding the damage done to municipal roads by motor vehicles; Municipal Commissioners not unnaturally making it a grievance that they have little power to control motor traffic and are not authorised to levy any special taxation on the owners of power-driven vehicles.

Reference was made in last year's resolution to a Bill empowering individual local authorities to tax the owners of motor vehicles. At the Select Committee stage, it was decided to substitute for this Bill a measure which would empower the Local Government to tax the owners of such vehicles and to distribute the proceeds among

local authorities. An Expert Committee was appointed to consider and report on the lines on which such legislation should be undertaken. The Committee recommended that the provincial tax on owners of motor vehicles should be on the same lines as the similar tax in force in the United Kingdom, various rates being charged in respect of different classes of vehicles. Before this recommendation could be considered by Government an intimation was received that the Government of India had appointed a Committee to consider the question of road development in India and, in particular, means of financing such development and at the suggestion of the Government of India the Local Government decided to postpone consideration of the Expert Committee's report. The Road Development Committee appointed by the Government of India has not yet finished its labours and although it is not possible to foresee what recommendations it will make, and what action the Government of India will take on them, it is possible that the committee may suggest some form of taxation on motor vehicles, the proceeds of which will be available for financing road development. It may therefore be that in the near future the Government of Bengal will have some money at their disposal earmarked for expenditure on the improvement of roads. This possibility has lately been brought to the notice of local bodies and they have been invited to draw up preparatory schemes for the improvement of roads in the areas under their charge.

Loans.

164. Loans amounting to Rs. 5,718 were granted from provincial revenues to the municipalities of Katwa (Rs. 718) and Khulna (Rs. 5,000). Altogether 43 municipalities were in debt to Government, their total liabilities amounting to nearly Rs. 31½ lakhs. Titagarh and Budge-Budge liquidated their debts in full.

Audit of accounts and embezzlement.

165. The accounts of almost all the municipalities were audited. Unfortunately little effort is made by municipalities in general to remedy the defects and irregularities noticed in the audit notes. Repetition of irregularities of the same nature is very common, indicating that Municipal Commissioners are disinclined to pay due heed to the observations made and instructions given by the audit officers. The Minister for Local Self-Government has expressed his full agreement with the following remarks made in this connection by Mr. Bingemann, the Magistrate of the 24-Parganas:—

"Over-reliance on the municipal office staff without effective supervision by the executives is mainly responsible for this state of affairs, and it is hoped that with harder working and more disinterested executives a better state of things will be seen."

Embezzlement or misappropriation of money occurred in Baruipore, Barasat, Sherpur (Mymensingh) and Rangpur. In Baruipore the Municipal Commissioners have so far failed to undertake a

prosecution urged on them by Government. In Barasat, a prosecution has been started, and a warrant of arrest has been issued against a peon who is believed to have absconded with Rs. 381-5-6, but no arrest has yet been effected. A sum of Rs. 58-14 was not credited by the tax-daroga of Sherpur and the auditor charged him and his assistant with misappropriation. The money was made good by the tax-daroga as soon as the omission was pointed out. On enquiry it was found that the offence was not intentional but accidental. However, the tax-daroga was warned and his assistant was punished with degradation for two years. In Rangpur the supposed culprit was a vaccinator but no clear case of dishonesty having been established the Commissioners fined him three months' pay "*pour encourager les autres.*" Criminal cases against the late tax-daroga of Maheshpur and one bill-sarkar of Katwa which were pending at the close of the previous year, ended in conviction. The bill-sarkar having preferred an appeal his conviction was set aside. In the defalcation case of Mymensingh which had been pending for a long time, the collecting sarkar threw himself on the mercy of the Court and was sentenced to one day's simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 300. He paid the fine.

There appears to be a tendency for embezzlement of municipal funds to occur more frequently than was formerly the case. The Minister in the Local Self-Government Department has therefore repeated the warning given previously:—

"Misappropriation of public money is a very grave offence, and where such offence appears to be established it is not sufficient for the Municipal Commissioners to punish the delinquent by dismissal or to rest satisfied with the refund of the amount which has been misappropriated. In the interests of public morality the offenders in cases, which appear to be capable of legal proof, should invariably be prosecuted criminally."

If there are grounds for leniency, it should be left to the trying court to be influenced by them in the exercise of its judicial discretion.

General remarks. Burdwan Division.

166. Improvement of water-supply and an extensive drainage scheme are essentially necessary to meet the growing demands of the town of Burdwan. The first question is receiving the attention of the Municipal Commissioners. By the installation of electric lights in the street a long-felt want has been removed. Road-watering has improved and the municipality has lately purchased a motor-watering-car. The general health of the town was good during the year. In Kalna the question of water-supply has been very acute especially in that part of the town which is remote from the Bhagirathi. The Municipal Commissioners propose to take up

a water-supply scheme with the help of the receipts from provincial ferries made over to them with effect from 1st April, 1927. Owing to the want of a proper water-supply the drainage system of Katwa, which was constructed at considerable cost, was far less efficient than it should be. The conditions of roads and drains in Raniganj are good, but encroachments are frequent. As regards municipal administration in the district of Bankura the District Magistrate observes:—

"The incidence of taxation is low in all the municipalities in the district in comparison with other districts in the Province and unless it is increased there is no hope of improvement. The condition of roads and drains and lighting arrangements in all the three municipalities is still as bad and unsatisfactory as before."

In Hooghly district the financial condition of the municipalities did not allow of any large scheme of improvement. Hooghly-Chinsura and Serampore are the only two important municipalities in this district. The financial condition of both is still unsatisfactory; though that of Hooghly-Chinsura shows in some respects a slight improvement, it is still in a state bordering on bankruptcy. The financial condition of Serampore shows no improvement. Party faction exists in most of the municipalities in the district. In Kotrung it appears to have transgressed the limits of decency, in Bansberia it is on the increase, while in Champdany and Rishra-Konnagar it appears to have decreased. The District Magistrate writes as follows regarding the Hooghly-Chinsurah Municipality:—

"The conservancy and drainage of the town are as bad as ever. Early in its career the present Board was faced with a strike of sweepers..... The lighting of the town in the area served by electricity has been satisfactory compared to the state of affairs preceding the utilisation of current from Gouripore Mill, but the Electric Supply Company have managed the distribution so badly that the position is still very unsatisfactory and there is great and reasonable ground for complaint..... The lighting of the part of the town not served by electricity is wretched in the extreme. The roads of the municipality show perhaps a little improvement. On practically all roads there have been encroachments and daily I see fresh attempts in the same direction..... The drains of the town are in a dreadful state..... As to the water-works the Sanitary Engineer's report suggests an imminent danger of a breakdown unless an expenditure which has been assessed at about Rs. 50,000 is incurred."

In Bally there was distinct improvement in the work of conservancy, drainage and road repairs; collections have also

improved. A scheme for lighting certain areas of the town is now under the consideration of Government.

**Presidency Division.**

167. The Magistrate of the 24-Parganas observes that there is nothing outstanding to note on the municipal administration of the year, the ordinary duties under the Act being performed fairly well in most places, with some exceptions. "An increasing interest in water-supply is manifested, but it is seldom that one finds any enthusiasm to extend primary education." The average incidence of taxation has not maintained its former rise; dropping from Re. 1-14-6 to Re. 1-13-10 during the year. Baranagore had another Health Exhibition, and its example was followed at Bhatpara where, with the help of the Mill authorities a successful exhibition was held. Except in Nabadwip and Santipur municipal administration in the district of Nadia has worked smoothly. At the former place, party faction among the Commissioners is very bitter, and they have chosen to revive the old question of the assessment of certain *thakurbaris*, a matter which involved much litigation and expense in the past. As regards Santipur the Magistrate writes as follows:—

"The Municipal Commissioners seem least alive to their duties as trustees of the public. Collections on the current demand were 78·1 per cent., the lowest figure in the district, and a sum of Rs. 26,676 remained uncollected at the end of the year; this includes heavy arrears from previous years. Unfortunately, the Chairman and several Commissioners are among the worst defaulters and seem unaware of the bad example set by them.....Collections during the year were so irregular that there was often insufficient money to meet current expenditure, so in addition to paying the sweepers late, the same treatment was meted out to their own office staff, the municipal High English school teachers and the dispensary staff; these people were sometimes paid nearly two months late. Still more serious is the fact that the municipality has been using money which does not belong to it; since May, 1924, neither the Provident Fund contributions from the pay of the municipal establishment, school teachers and dispensary staff, nor the municipal contributions have been put into the Provident Fund account, but have been used by the municipality. The municipality owes Rs. 8,050 *plus* interest on this account."

Roads are generally bad in most municipalities in the district of Nadia and owing to the large mileage, the burden of upkeep is very heavy; Krishnagar has 29 miles of metalled and 77 miles of unmetalled road to maintain. With its steam-roller and stone-metalling Krishnagar is gradually improving its roads, but progress is slow, as the cost works out at Rs. 2,700 per mile, so that only 3 or 4 miles can be done in one year. Kushtia is steadily

tackling the problem and has spent Rs. 6,950 under this head. It has also purchased a motor-lorry for carrying night soil to the trenching ground.

Mr. Durno concludes :—

"Though few of the municipalities in this district possess the ordinary amenities of life such as good health, good sanitation and good roads, there seems to be a general reluctance to embark on schemes to obtain any of these benefits, unless there is the assurance of a substantial grant or loan from Government; if this is not forthcoming, improvements on a small scale are generally carried out, and this has been the nature of the work in most of the municipalities during the year. The spirit of self-help develops slowly, and it is only beginning to dawn on some people that there are very few things in this world that one can get without paying for them. Added to this is the usual reluctance to apply any coercion to obtain punctual payment of rates and taxes or to remove nuisances which affect public health."

The municipal administration of the district of Murshidabad was fairly managed as far as municipal funds permitted. The health of the municipal towns was generally good, though the arrangements for conservancy and road-watering were not very satisfactory.

In Berhampore, the *methars'* co-operative society did good work in giving relief to individual members in time of need. The Municipal Employees' Association also did useful service.

The Murshidabad Municipality was financially hampered owing to non-receipt of the Jiaganj ferry rent from the Jiaganj-Azimganj Municipality, and it could not pay off the contribution towards the pay of the Assistant Surgeon of the Lalbagh Dispensary.

The assessment of the Khulna Municipality was too low, the taxes in rural wards being lower than the rates imposed by the neighbouring union boards. The Municipal Commissioners have finally decided to introduce the tax on holdings in the really urban areas with effect from the year 1928-29.

The financial affairs of the Satkhira Municipality are still in a hopeless condition. The outstanding balance is Rs. 6,132, against a current demand of Rs. 12,847.

A new board has recently been formed at Debhatta and the Magistrate hopes that it will do more than its predecessors to justify the existence of the municipality.

The Commissioner of the Presidency Division makes the following remarks:—

"The general level of efficiency in the administration of the municipalities remains much the same as in the previous year. There was smooth working everywhere, except at Nabadwip and Santipur where the faction referred to in the last report still continues. Attempts are being made to settle once for all the differences at Nabadwip, where party feelings seem to have centred for a number of years round the vexed question of the assessment of certain *thakurbaris*.

"The average incidence of taxation remains practically unaltered. A larger current demand, smaller collections and decreased closing balances were the noticeable features of the year's working. The average percentage of collection to the total demand fell from 96·9 to 93·2. There was the usual reluctance on the part of the executive officers to take coercive measures. A few of the municipalities, however, returned more than cent. per cent., and Moheshpur deserves special mention in this respect. Several, such as Panihati, Murshidabad, Jiaganj-Azimganj, Kandi and Debhatta failed to keep the minimum working balance, and some had larger outstanding liabilities than their own balances. Attempts have been made to rectify these defects as far as possible when passing the budget.

"Greater activity was noticeable in the matter of water-supply.

"Most of the municipalities maintained the requisite standard of expenditure on primary education.....

"Roads, however, continue to be bad everywhere, and improvements are slow.....

"The municipalities have generally acted with promptitude in taking measures for combating epidemic diseases and in some cases timely action has prevented outbreaks. Greater attention seems to have been given to general sanitary measures such as jungle-clearing and ditch-filling and the small municipality of Birnagar deserves special mention in this respect....."

**Dacca Division.**

168. The outstanding achievement of the Faridpur Municipality was to bring its water-works scheme to a stage where ultimate success is practically assured The financial condition of the municipality was, however, unsound; roads are largely neglected and the damage done by flood every year is not adequately repaired; the market is in a scandalous condition. Collections declined in 1926-27 and much of the expenditure of that year will have to be paid out of the income for 1927-28. At Madaripur conditions are more promising: free education is being seriously tackled, roads are being improved and extended, markets are properly controlled

and generally speaking satisfactory progress is being made. Collections were also good. The most urgent requirement of the municipality is the provision of an adequate and better water-supply and steps are being taken to this end. The District Magistrate gives much credit to the official Chairman of the Rajbari Municipality for the remarkable improvement made in the town. It is reported that the Chairman has improved collections, reduced expenditure on establishment, extended the pipe line and put in more street hydrants and generally stimulated municipal administration to something approaching efficiency. Mr. Burrows observes:—

"The cardinal defect in municipal administration in this district is pettiness of outlook and feeling, the pursuit of personal rather than public advantage, the disregard of rate-payers' interests except in the matter of increased taxation. More funds are necessary everywhere, and Peter must meanwhile be robbed to provide for Paul because the Commissioners are too shortsighted to see that Peter is as much an extension and reproduction of their corporate personality as Paul."

As regards the municipalities in Bakarganj the Magistrate remarks that there is no outstanding feature to which attention can be drawn in any of the municipalities. The Barisal Municipality failed to effect any appreciable reduction in its arrear demands. The Chairman of the Dacca Municipality reports that municipal meetings during the year were free from all acrimonious and personal discussions and in all decisions the interest of the municipality was placed first.

The Commissioner of the Division observes:—

"On the whole there has I think been an improvement in municipal administration as compared with the previous year. There has been some improvement in the collection of the municipal rates though the arrears are still excessive in Mymensingh, Barisal and Bhola as well as in Dacca and Sherpur where they are due to litigation in regard to the assessment. Work has been less impeded by factions among the Municipal Commissioners and progress has been made with several schemes for the improvement of the municipal water-supply."

169. The financial condition of the Chittagong Municipality is not sound and the Commissioner of the Division advises the Board to reorganise its finances, to overhaul its establishment and to put its assessment on a more equitable basis before launching out into the developments which are inevitable in the near future. There was a breakdown in the machinery of the Comilla water-works and the Municipal Commissioners had to devote their Chittagong Division.

whole energy to putting this in order. The finances of the Noakhali Municipality are unsatisfactory and the Commissioners are unable to undertake the much-needed improvement of their roads and drains for want of funds.

**Rajshahi Division.**

170. The administration of the Rajshahi Municipality was satisfactory. The great needs of this town are water-supply and drainage. The prospects of providing a satisfactory water-supply in the near future are good, but a fresh effort will be needed to establish a proper drainage system. The work of the Jalpaiguri Municipality is hampered by lack of funds, but the municipality is reported to have done much with the means at its disposal. The sanitary condition of the town is bad and a drainage system is badly needed. The financial position of the Bogra Municipality is far from satisfactory as the deficit balance of the general fund has not been made up. The Magistrate reports that unless the tax on holdings is introduced there is little chance of any appreciable change for the better. The condition of roads in Sherpur, which is an old and decaying town, is not satisfactory. The Magistrate reports that the general standard of administration in the district of Malda remains at the same level and is characterised in all the municipalities by slackness and indifference. There is some indication that Nawabganj is trying to tighten up control a little, but there, too, the standard is far from satisfactory.

The Kurseong Municipality is reported to have been well administered.

The Commissioner of the Rajshahi Division observes:—

"The Pabna Municipality has succeeded in improving its collections, but has taken a retrograde step in cancelling its original resolution to substitute a tax on holdings for the tax on persons. The working of the Serajganj Municipality has been unsatisfactory. Various municipalities have been trying to push forward water-supply schemes; but there is too great a tendency to rely on large individual donations from Government or private persons and too little effort by the general body of tax-payers who will be benefited by the schemes. In water-supply schemes much more could be done in the way of raising loans."

It is gratifying to learn that since the above remarks were written the Municipal Commissioners of Pabna have decided to substitute with effect from 1st April, 1928, a tax on holdings for the tax on persons.

**Concluding remarks.**

171. On the whole the divisional reports furnish grounds not for complacency but for a certain degree of optimism.

It is regretted that there are Municipal Commissioners who default in the payment of municipal taxes; but the number of those who do so is very small compared with the number whose conduct is beyond reproach in this respect.

Lax supervision of accounts and slackness in collecting municipal dues are, if less serious, a more widespread evil than deliberate default on the part of Municipal Commissioners; they result in waste and misappropriation and in unfairness to public-spirited townsfolk who have to suffer because others do not pay their taxes and are not forced to do so.

It was remarked in last year's resolution on municipal administration that though the general incidence of taxation is low municipal incomes do show an upward tendency, and actual statistics can be produced in support of this assertion. The yield of local taxation in 112 municipalities amounted in 1920-21 to Rs. 47,96,630 while in 1926-27 the total was Rs. 63,77,706. This is a substantial rise and, when allowance is made for other factors, affords concrete evidence of increasing readiness to submit to taxation for the public good.

## Calcutta Corporation.

Introductory.

172. As the report on the administration of the Calcutta Corporation for the year 1925-26 had not been received in time no review could be made of its working in the General Administration Report for 1925-26. The following, therefore, relates to the working of the Corporation for the years 1925-26 and 1926-27.

1925-26. Personnel.

Mr. C. R. Das who was elected Mayor for the second time died on the 16th June, 1925, and Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta was elected in his place. Mr. J. C. Mukherjea continued to act as Chief Executive Officer.

Finances.

173. The Revenue Funds opened with a balance of Rs. 57,17,698; the receipts amounted to Rs. 2,16,16,582 and the payments to Rs. 1,96,50,255. Taking assets and liabilities into account, the income amounted to Rs. 2,23,09,890 and the expenditure to Rs. 1,97,13,773. The closing balance at the end of the year amounted to Rs. 76,84,025 of which Rs. 61,15,299 was in cash, the remainder representing the value of stores in stock and recoverable advances.

The 6½ per cent. Debenture Loan of 1924-25 for Rs. 5,54,500 having fallen short of the amount required for repayment of the 4 per cent. loan of 1899-1900 which fell due on 1st November, 1924, by Rs. 10,993, a supplementary loan of Rs. 11,000 was raised

during the year to make up the deficit. A further loan of Rs. 84,70,000 bearing interest at 6 per cent. was raised for the water-supply extension scheme and other works. The total indebtedness of the Corporation at the end of the year stood at Rs. 6,52,41,673 (including Rs. 58,373 being the debt of the three municipalities added to Calcutta in 1924), *plus* £500,000 against which there was an accumulation of Rs. 1,20,71,898 in the Sinking Funds and the Reserve Fund, taking the securities (which consist entirely of Municipal Debentures) at par. The total annual liability for interest and Sinking Fund charges on all outstanding loans amounted to Rs. 47,69,597.

**Assessment Department.**

174. As the result of general revision of assessments and the construction of new buildings, there was an increase of Rs. 56,38,779 in the assessed valuation of the city which stood at Rs. 8,74,44,420 at the end of the year.

**Surveyor's Department.**

175. The department prepared plans and estimates for 204 projects estimated to cost Rs. 108 lakhs and acquired 9 bighas of land at a cost of Rs. 4½ lakhs.

**Collection Department.**

176. The total gross demand on account of the consolidated rate was Rs. 1,68,70,286, of which Rs. 1,55,65,107 was collected, Rs. 7,39,228 was cancelled on account of holdings being vacant and demands aggregating Rs. 9,041 were cancelled as irrecoverable. The percentage of collection on the gross current demand was 95·02 and on the net current demand (*i.e.*, after elimination of the demand cancelled on account of vacancy) was 98·49 against 95·06 and 98·74, respectively, in the previous year.

**License Department.**

177. The total collections on account of license taxes amounted to Rs. 19,48,844 of which Rs. 12,52,129 was on account of tax on trades and professions, Rs. 3,66,156 on account of the tax on carriages and animals, and Rs. 1,80,699 on account of fees for the registration of carts. The total number of licenses of all kinds issued during the year was 78,252 and the total collection under the Licensed Warehouse and Fire Brigade Act amounted to Rs. 1,48,346.

**Water-supply**

178. There was an increase in the daily supply of filtered water from 36¾ million gallons to nearly 38 million gallons giving a supply of 35·1 gallons per head per day as against 34 gallons in the previous year. The supply of unfiltered water also increased from 36½ million gallons to nearly 39 million gallons. As the engines at Tallah were giving trouble, two spare electrical units from the Mullick Ghat Pumping Station were removed there. Substantial progress was made with the works in connection with

the water-supply extension scheme. Twelve new filter beds at Pulta have been nearly completed, the work on the new settling tank is well advanced, and the construction of the new pumping station building was taken in hand. About 10 miles of Zone mains were laid, and about Rs. 114 lakhs worth of work was done out of the revised estimate of the cost of the whole scheme amounting to Rs. 265¾ lakhs.

Drainage.

179. As it was found that the scheme to provide a spill reservoir as a means of resuscitating the Bidyadhari river which has hitherto received the drainage of Calcutta might not prove successful, the Corporation decided that the rivers Bidyadhari, Peali and Matla should be surveyed with a view to collect sufficient data for the preparation of a satisfactory scheme. The work on this survey was started in the middle of 1924 and considerable progress was made during the year. To improve further the efficiency of the plant at the Plamer's Bridge Pumping Station, four new Impellers for the centrifugal pumps were ordered. Several small improvements were effected in various localities to minimise the flooding to which they have hitherto been subject, and the result has been satisfactory.

Lighting Department.

180. There were 17,111 gas lamps in the city at the end of the year or 573 more than at the beginning. In addition to these there were 1,159 oil lights and 1,407 electric lamps as against 1,610 and 512 in the previous year. The lighting of the areas recently added to Calcutta was greatly improved during the year.

Bustee Department.

181. The action taken by the Bustee Department resulted in 25 bighas of land being cleared of huts, in the construction of about one and one-third mile of bustee roads, 56 connected privies and 2 bathing platforms. Twenty-eight private streets were improved and 24 bustees were surveyed with a view to action for their improvement. Alignments were laid down to regulate the construction of huts over an area of nearly 2,182 bighas.

Conservancy.

182. The daily average quantity of refuse dealt with was 1,308 tons and the total expenditure on street cleansing, the incinerator and the Municipal railway amounted to Rs. 19,36,773.

Building Department.

183. The total number of applications for sanction was about the same as in the previous year (8,860 against 8,885). Twenty-seven per cent. of the plans received in respect of masonry buildings were sanctioned and 42 per cent. in the case of huts. One thousand three hundred and thirty-two notices were issued in respect of insecure buildings and 1,297 cases of unauthorised construction were sent up to the Municipal Magistrates for orders of demolition.

Public health.

184. Including the added areas the birth-rate for the city of Calcutta for the year was 18·9 per thousand as against 19 in the previous year, and the death-rate per mille was 32·7 as against 29·8. There was a marked increase in the mortality from influenza, the number of deaths being 551 against 395 in the previous year. The severe epidemic of small-pox which broke out towards the end of the previous year, lasted till the middle of June of the year under review and was responsible for 3,923 deaths or one-ninth of the total mortality. There was a further rise in the mortality from kala-azar during the year, the death-rate being ·76 per thousand as compared with ·65 per thousand in the preceding year. There was also increased mortality from malaria and enteric which accounted for 2,011 and 613 deaths, respectively, as against 1,562 and 550 deaths in the previous year. Other fevers, cholera, dysentery, measles and respiratory diseases were less prevalent than in 1924. There were 6,637 deaths of infants which is equivalent to a death-rate of 326 per thousand registered births as against 317 per thousand in the previous year.

The Lady Health Visitors and Midwives employed by the Corporation continued to do very useful work in connection with maternity cases and child welfare generally. There are now 5 units at work consisting of 5 Lady Health Visitors and 18 midwives. They delivered 4,748 cases and removed 71 complicated cases to hospitals. Excluding still-births, there were 163 deaths during the first 10 days out of 4,748 babies delivered by the Corporation Midwives, giving a death-rate of 35·5 per thousand births as against the general infantile death-rate for the city within the first week of 104·8 per thousand. There were only 13 deaths among the women attended by the Corporation staff.

In the Buldeodas Maternity Home which was opened towards the close of last year, 613 patients were admitted. Out of 534 cases delivered there were only 7 maternal deaths. In view of the popularity of this Home, another Maternity Home was opened during the year with 12 beds in a rented house in Chetla, in the southern section of the town. The number of patients admitted in this Home from April to December was 101 and the total number of labour cases dealt with was 77. Health Associations were organized in different wards to give free medical aid in cases of kala-azar, malaria and tuberculosis and to assist the Department in public health work generally. There were altogether 27 such associations at the end of the year. They treated 24,763 cases, performed 20,670 vaccinations and delivered 380 lantern lectures.

Two milk kitchens and baby clinics were started during the year—one in Chetla and another in Garden Reach. Five hundred

and seven babies were treated at the two clinics and 534 maunds of milk were distributed during the year.

Food Inspection.

185. The total number of samples of foodstuffs of all kinds analysed was 5,208 of which 1,031 were found adulterated. One hundred and sixty-three out of 993 samples of *ghee*, 334 out of 1,145 samples of milk, 69 out of 717 samples of mustard oil, 26 out of 277 samples of butter were found adulterated. The total number of prosecutions instituted during the year was 5,698 and the fines imposed amounted to Rs. 25,724. Two thousand, five hundred and twenty-eight maunds of unwholesome foodstuffs were destroyed during the year.

Milk supply.

186. A practical step was taken during the year towards the solution of the milk supply problem. The Corporation entered into an agreement with the Co-operative Milk Societies Union—which has 52 societies in villages near Calcutta—by which the latter agreed to supply during the first year not less than 100 maunds of milk a day and to increase the quantity annually by 100 maunds to 500 maunds a day in the fifth year. In addition to a subsidy of Rs. 5,000, a loan of Rs. 50,000 without interest was granted by the Corporation to the Union for ice-plant, sanitary milk-cans, buildings, etc., to be repaid within 6 years by easy instalments.

Municipal Markets.

187. The total revenue from the five Municipal Markets amounted to Rs. 11,53,704 as against Rs. 10,19,391 in the preceding year. In spite of a small decrease from rents of shops and stalls, the revenue from the Sir Stuart Hogg Market rose from Rs. 7,43,634 to Rs. 8,17,503 and that from the College Street Market from Rs. 2,05,363 to Rs. 2,60,460. The increase from the other markets was small and amounted to Rs. 5,347.

Primary education.

188. The number of Corporation free primary schools was 89 at the end of the year or 38 more than at the beginning. The total number of pupils on the rolls was 10,208 as against 6,128 in the previous year (*viz.*, 7,130 boys and 3,078 girls). The total expenditure on the Corporation free primary schools amounted to Rs. 1,11,649. In addition to this amount a sum of Rs. 1,29,229 was spent in grants to schools.

1926-27. Personnel.

189. Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta was elected Mayor for the second time and Mr. J. C. Mukerjea continued to act as Chief Executive Officer throughout the year.

Finances.

190. The Revenue Account of the Corporation opened with a balance of Rs. 76,84,025. The receipts during the year amounted to Rs. 2,11,69,287 and the payments to Rs. 2,04,27,829. Allowing for assets and liabilities, the income amounted to

Rs. 2,16,84,402 and the expenditure to Rs. 2,08,56,542, and on the basis of actual receipts and payments there was a balance of Rs. 84,25,483 of which Rs. 53,72,664 was in cash. The Corporation raised no loan during the year, and its total indebtedness at the end of the year stood at Rs. 7,26,92,591 including Rs. 74,59,792 of the Sterling Debenture Loan of £500,000 against which there was an accumulation of Rs. 1,40,53,017 in the Sinking Funds and Reserve Fund taking the securities (which are all Municipal Debentures) at par under section 117 (2) of the Calcutta Municipal Act. The total actual liability for interest, contributions to the Sinking Funds and instalment towards repayment of Government loans amounted to Rs. 51,60,384 during the year.

**Assessment Department.**

191. As a result of general revision of assessment and the construction of new buildings, there was an increase of Rs. 30,09,659 in the assessed annual valuation of the city which stood at Rs. 9,04,54,079.

**Survey Department.**

192. The department prepared plans and estimates for 225 projects involving an area of about 705 bighas of land estimated to cost Rs. 187¼ lakhs and acquired nearly 4 bighas of land at a cost of about Rs. 4,14,000.

**Collection Department.**

193. The total gross demand on account of the consolidated rate including the balance outstanding at the end of the previous year was Rs. 1,72,72,555 of which Rs. 1,58,56,727 was collected, Rs. 7,16,155 cancelled on account of holdings being vacant, and demands aggregating Rs. 10,841 were cancelled as irrecoverable. The percentage of collection on the net current demand declined from 98·49 to 98·15. The decrease in the percentage is due mainly to the issue of a large number of fresh and supplementary bills and to other causes beyond the control of the Collector.

**License Department.**

194. The total collection during the year on account of license taxes amounted to Rs. 19,02,429 of which about 68 per cent. was on account of the tax on trades and professions, Rs. 3,72,339 on account of the carriage and horse tax and Rs. 1,71,568 was on account of the fee for the registration of carts. The total number of licenses of all kinds issued during the year was 73,788 and the total collection under the Licensed Warehouse and Fire Brigade Act, amounted to Rs. 1,60,509.

**Lighting Department.**

195. There were 17,560 gas lamps in the city at the end of the year, while the number of oil and electric lamps was 1,141 and 1,703, respectively. The scheme for the departmental maintenance of street electric lighting throughout the city has been generally approved by the Corporation and the work will be taken up next year. The scheme for the improvement of lighting in Russa Road between Chowringhee and Hazra Road has been sanctioned.

Water-supply.

196. The total daily quantity of filtered water supplied during the year amounted to 38·5 million gallons and of unfiltered water to about 40·5 million gallons, making a total of 79 million gallons approximately. The supply per head was 35·6 gallons of filtered water and 44·5 gallons of unfiltered water. During the year one more filter bed out of the extension scheme was brought into use. In spite of the increased supply of filtered water the supplies in Garden Reach, Chetla, Kalighat and Manicktolla had to be supplemented by means of carts and lorries. Steps were taken to sink two more tube-wells in Chetla. There was a serious contamination of the filtered water-supply in a lane due to a burst in the filtered water main and sewage percolating into it. The affected area was, however, isolated immediately the contamination was noticed and steps were taken to chlorinate the supply. The defects were then removed. At Tallah the electric pump was shifted from the Diesel Engine Room to the G. H. Engine Room and another electric pump was transferred from Mullick Ghat. The old tube-well at Garden Reach was out of commission from the 2nd December, 1926, due to the strainer having got damaged. Steps were taken immediately to sink another tube-well and the work is in progress.

As regards the unfiltered water-supply a serious dislocation was caused by the flooding of the Mullick Ghat Pumping Station early in the morning of the 22nd July as a result of heavy rain. Steps were immediately taken to transfer two of the motors from the Watgunge Pumping Station and one from the Tallah Pumping Station and to repair as many motors as possible *in situ*. It was, however, not till 4th August that some supply could be given and normal supply was not restored until the evening of 25th August.

Satisfactory progress was made with the works in connection with the water-supply extension scheme. At Pulta all the embankments of the new settling tank were completed except in two places. Of the 18 filter beds under construction, three were completed in every detail and have been brought into use, but the under-drainage of these filters is becoming blocked by the sand which is percolating through the layer of gravel. Investigation is proceeding with a view to finding some means of preventing this. As regards the remaining 15 filter beds, the masonry work was completed in 13 of them and filtering materials are being collected. In the case of the remaining 2, the work has been nearly half done. The new pumping station is completed and the erection of new machinery is almost finished; some details remain to complete this contract. At Tallah the underground reservoir and the new pump house were completed and the bulk of the machinery was erected. The bridge over the Circular Canal to carry the new water main was finished. Of the total length of the new main (70,200 ft.) to be laid, from Pulta to Tallah, 54,400 ft. were laid up to the end

of the year under report. The work in connection with the Zone Mains has not made much progress, as out of the total length of 95,000 ft. only about 33,000 ft. were laid. In connection with the unfiltered supply 3 more pumps were installed at the Watgunge Pumping Station.

**Drainage Department.**

197. During the year under report the Corporation adopted certain recommendations made by a Conference of Engineers which had been called by the Calcutta Improvement Trust to consider the question of drainage of the newly added areas of Garden Reach, Cossipore-Chitpur and Manicktolla. These proposals comprised, among others, an extension scheme of a new low level outfall sewer and concentration of the sewage flow at a new Pumping Station in the neighbourhood of Topsia, and an extension of the intercepting sewer in Canal West Road to Chitpore. The estimated cost of this basic scheme was Rs. 171 lakhs. The object of the proposal is to lower the water level as far as is practicable in the existing sewers of the city and by adequate pumping to raise the dry weather flow from the City and Manicktolla and also a portion of the Storm Water to a sufficient height to command any outfall which may be decided upon later. The Corporation have approved of the proposals in their broad outlines and have decided to place Mr. Wilkinson on special duty to work out the details. The Corporation survey work in connection with the process of decay proceeding in the Central Lake Channel, Bidyadhari, Matla and other connected waterways was in progress.

**Bustee Department.**

198. Twenty-one new bustees were surveyed with a view to having them improved and standard plans were prepared in respect of 29 bustee areas. Thirty-six bighas of land were cleared of huts and one and a quarter miles of bustee roads and passages were opened up. Forty-seven connected privies and 2 bathing platforms were constructed and 43 private streets have been improved.

**Conservancy.**

199. The daily average quantity of refuse dealt with was 1,291 tons and the total expenditure on street cleansing, the incinerator and the Municipal Railway amounted to Rs. 19,99,662. The Corporation have sanctioned the construction of the first portion of the new refuse platform at Chingrighatta and the work has been taken in hand.

**Roads.**

200. The total expenditure on road repairs amounted to Rs. 12,51,740. In addition, a sum of Rs. 1,69,315 was spent in paving roads with asphaltum and Rs. 2,04,398 on minor road improvements.

**Building Department.**

201. The total number of applications submitted for sanction was 8,683 against 8,860 in the previous year. Sanction was given to 25 per cent. of the plans received in the case of masonry buildings

and 37 per cent. in the case of huts. No fewer than 1,202 notices were served in respect of insecure buildings. A staff of 4 Inspectors was appointed to deal with cases of insecure construction and action has so far been taken in respect of 450 buildings resulting in an appreciable reduction in the number of collapses within the city.

Public health.

202. The total number of births registered during the year in the City including the added areas was 18,199 or 16·9 per mille. This shows a slight fall both for Calcutta proper and for the added areas as compared with the figures for the previous year. The death-rate was 34·7 per mille as against 32·7 in the previous year. The increase was due to higher mortality rates from cholera, measles, enteric and other fevers, dysentery and diarrhœa, tuberculosis and respiratory diseases. There was a widespread epidemic of Epidemic dropsy and beri-beri in the city which was responsible for no fewer than 939 deaths or a death-rate of ·87 per mille. There was, however, a decrease in the mortality from small-pox, malaria, kala-azar and influenza. The city was entirely free from plague during the year. Deaths among infants under one year numbered 6,770 giving a rate of 372 per 1,000 registered births which is slightly higher than the rate (326 per thousand) of the previous year.

The Lady Health Visitors and the midwives employed by the Corporation continued to do excellent work. They delivered 6,276 cases and removed 226 difficult cases of labour to hospitals. Excluding still-births, the rate of infantile mortality amongst cases attended by the Corporation midwives during the first 10 days was only 25 per thousand while the general infantile rate within the first week was 116·1. There were only 4 maternal deaths among the women delivered by the Corporation staff.

Food inspection.

203. The total number of food-stuffs of all kinds analysed during the year was 4,005 of which 993 were found adulterated. Two hundred and seventy out of 1,112 samples of milk, 103 out of 1,005 samples of *ghee*, 304 out of 1,200 samples of mustard oil, 48 out of 100 samples of sago and 9 out of 30 samples of corn-flour and arrowroot were found adulterated. The total number of prosecutions instituted during the year was 2,870 and the fines imposed amounted to Rs. 25,818.

Municipal markets.

204. The total revenue from the five markets amounted to Rs. 11,77,301 against Rs. 11,54,783 in the preceding year. There was an increase in revenue from all the Municipal Markets except the Sir Charles Allen Market where there was a slight falling off. The construction of new blocks for the Sir Stuart Hogg Market in Korabardar Lane is nearing completion while the extension of the Entally Market was completed and brought into use during the year.

Education.

205. The total amount of expenditure incurred by the Corporation for educational purposes of all kinds amounted to Rs. 4,46,018 as against Rs. 2,61,737 in the previous year. At the end of the year there were 140 schools with 16, 649 pupils against 89 schools and 10,208 pupils in the previous year. Of the total number of pupils, 10,695 were boys and 5,954 girls as compared with 7,130 boys and 3,078 girls at the end of the previous year. Of the total number of schools 19 were part-time and were held in the morning while 121 were day schools, the corresponding figures of the preceding year being 24 and 65, respectively. During the year 1 Model School was started in Ward 10. At the close of the year there were 513 teachers in all, of whom 363 were males and 150 females.

General election.

206. The Second General Election under the new Act was held on the 16th March, 1927. The total number of electors was 67,079. There were contests in 19 out of the 32 Non-Muhammadan constituencies and in 6 out of the 7 Muhammadan constituencies and the votes cast were 50·46 per cent. of the total voting strength of the contested wards. The present Corporation consists of 55 Hindus, 18 Muhammadans, 14 Europeans and Anglo-Indians, 1 Indian Christian and 2 Jews.

## Calcutta Improvement Trust.

[Report on the operations of the Calcutta Improvement Trust, 1926-27.]

Improvement schemes.

207. Four improvement schemes including one for the improvement of the Maydapati area in Burrabazar were sanctioned, while three schemes were published for public criticism. Improvement scheme No. XXII (Sashi Bhusan De Street widening—St. James Square to Bowbazar Street) was published *de novo* under section 43 of the Calcutta Improvement Act. Three schemes, *viz.*, the Burrabazar Improvement scheme No. I (south-west section), scheme No. VIIIB (extension of the proposed park in connection with Park Street extension and the construction of a 100 ft. road to the north of the park) and scheme No. XVIIA (Eden Hospital road to Chatawalla *gullee*) were postponed indefinitely. Improvement scheme No. XXIII (construction of a road on the north of the Karbala Tank Lane rehousing scheme) was also abandoned. Chitpur Spur and the road from Machuabazar Street to Beadon Street (Improvement scheme No. VII) were taken over by the Corporation during the year. The position of the street alignment schemes was the same as in the previous year.

In order to develop the outlying tract of Ballygunge the Board decided in 1925 to subsidize the Tramway service which the Calcutta Tramways Co., Ltd., propose to open from Russa Road along new

Sewer Road to the Ballygunge railway station. A draft agreement with the Tramways Company was approved by Government. Later however the Calcutta Corporation suggested that motor-buses were likely to afford a more satisfactory service. After much consideration the Board decided that a tramway service would be preferable to an omnibus service, and to this the Corporation eventually gave its assent.

A committee was appointed by the Board to advise what additional legal powers, if any, the Trust requires to facilitate the improvement of Burrabazar. The Committee's report was approved by the Board and it was resolved that Government be moved to amend the Calcutta Improvement Act so as (*i*) to supplement the existing exemption fee system by the betterment fee system with safeguards in the shape of a Board of Arbitrators to adjudicate on cases in which the owners of properties and the Board are unable to come to terms, (*ii*) to limit the betterment fee to 50 per cent. of the increase in value created by an improvement scheme, and (*iii*) to omit section 14 of the schedule to the Calcutta Improvement Act. Government expressed their willingness to draft a Bill on these lines and to circulate it for opinion.

Rehousing scheme.

208. The position of the rehousing schemes was practically the same as in the previous year. Of the 96 small sites on the Paikpara Road provided for those who have been displaced by the operation of the Trust, 24 plots in all were sold up to 31st March, 1927. As the Kerabala Tank Lane rehousing scheme was not popular with the class of tenants for whom it was intended, the Board decided to sell off 35 semi-detached houses in addition to the four already disposed of. Three of these houses were sold during the year.

Open spaces.

209. Further progress was made with the raising of low lands and in the construction of roads and drains in connection with the Cossipur-Chitpur Park which covers an area of 225 bighas. The layout of the Park in connection with scheme No. IVA (south of Tramway Depot) was completed and that of the Amherst Street Park was nearing completion. The Nalanda Square was handed over to the Corporation.

Finance.

210. The Board's income derived from the duty on transfer of property amounted to Rs. 5,15,148 as compared with Rs. 4,74,522 in the previous year. This increase was due to the incorporation of the suburban areas of Cossipur-Chitpur, Garden Reach and Maniktola in the Calcutta Municipality. The terminal tax (Rs. 1,97,752) showed a decrease of Rs. 22,400 and the duty levied on jute fell from Rs. 11,16,675 to Rs. 10,84,735. The Municipal contribution amounted to Rs. 17 lakhs as against Rs. 16 lakhs in the previous year. Temporary lettings of undemolished

holdings fetched rents amounting to Rs. 2 lakhs and Rs. 2 lakhs were realised from exemption fees. The income from sale of lands and buildings amounted to 27¾ lakhs of rupees against Rs. 21 lakhs in the previous year. A sum of Rs. 13 lakhs was spent on engineering works. The total income and expenditure under the capital account were respectively Rs. 29½ lakhs and Rs. 55¾ lakhs and those under the revenue account about Rs. 47¼ lakhs and Rs. 28⅓ lakhs.

## District Boards.

[The reports of the Commissioners of Divisions on the working of District Boards in Bengal during the year 1926-27.]

District Boards.

211. The total number of members increased from 676 to 683 and the percentage of elected members was 61·2. Two District Boards out of a total number of 26 had nominated Chairmen, one of whom was an official. The Chairman elected by the reconstituted District Board of Midnapore did not meet with the approval of Government. As Government had no power to call on the Board to elect another Chairman, the order extending to the Midnapore District Board the privilege of electing its one Chairman was temporarily rescinded and a non-official Chairman was appointed. The number of meetings held during the year was 421 of which 9 proved abortive for want of a quorum. The Hooghly District Board again failed to meet once a month. Party faction seriously hampered the proper working of the Midnapore District Board. The administration of the 24-Parganas District Board continued to be carried on under the same disadvantage.

Local Boards.

212. There was no change in the number of Local Boards. Out of a total number of 82 Local Boards with 1,335 members, four were presided over by nominated non-official Chairmen, another four by elected official Chairmen and the rest by elected non-official Chairmen. They held 852 meetings of which 27 proved abortive for want of a quorum. The question of the future of Local Boards is still under consideration.

Finance of District Boards.

213. The receipts amounted to Rs. 138·75 lakhs against Rs. 135·3 lakhs in the preceding year, the increase being mainly due to larger receipts under the heads "Medical" and "Debt". The receipts under "Education," "Civil Works" and "Scientific" and other minor departments declined. The expenditure rose from Rs. 137·07 lakhs to Rs. 141·21 lakhs. The increase was chiefly due to larger expenditure on "Education," "Medical," "Civil Works," "General Administration" and "Scientific" and other minor departments. The closing balance amounted to Rs. 36·42 lakhs

(of which Rs. 17·85 lakhs were in cash) against Rs. 37·16 lakhs in the previous year.

214. The average incidence of cess throughout the Presidency was 2 annas 11 pies a year per head of population, varying in different districts from 1 anna 7 pies to 9 annas. Taxation.

215. The expenditure rose by Rs. 2·37 lakhs to Rs. 32·84 lakhs of which Government contributed Rs. 18·25 lakhs, while other contributions, school fees and miscellaneous receipts amounted to Rs. 11,000, Rs. 12,000 and Rs. 26,000 respectively. District Boards from their own funds contributed Rs. 13·8 lakhs against Rs. 11·26 lakhs in the previous year. Education.

The number of upper and lower primary schools maintained and aided by District Boards rose from 41,998 to 43,701, 32,574 being boys' schools and 11,127 girls' schools. The number of pupils attending these schools was boys 1,164,738, girls 280,668.

Several Union Boards continued to maintain free primary schools on the lines suggested by Mr. Biss. The primary schools in Burdwan District (except in Asansol subdivision) were under the management and control of the Union Boards concerned. In Faridpur there were 26 free primary schools under the management of 4 Union Boards. New free primary schools were started in Bankura, Murshidabad and the 24-Parganas districts. In pursuance of a policy of imparting free education all over the district the 24-Parganas District Board sanctioned a scheme for the establishment of one free primary school in every thana.

The number of night schools established in Birbhum and Hooghly for the education of labouring classes increased from 136 to 149 with about 3,000 pupils on their rolls. The District Board of Darjeeling aided 109 such schools.

Technical and Industrial education continued to receive attention. One peripatetic weaving school in Bakarganj, two weaving schools in Dinajpur and one technical school in Pabna were provincialised. A weaving school was started at Khulna. It teaches plain and fancy weaving of cotton cloth and spinning of jute coir and silk. The scheme for the establishment of a technical school at Krishnagar matured during the year. The Howrah District Board encouraged hand spinning in middle schools.

216. The expenditure under these heads aggregated Rs. 21·69 lakhs against Rs. 20·24 lakhs of the previous year. Twenty-three new dispensaries were opened and the total number of dispensaries maintained and aided was 508 and 346, respectively. Dispensaries were also maintained by some Union Boards. Medical relief was as usual provided primarily through these institutions and also through Medical relief and Public Health.

a small number of Homeopathic, Ayurvedic and Hakimi dispensaries maintained or subsidised by District Boards. During epidemics of fever, cholera and small-pox additional centres were opened under trained doctors and itinerant doctors were also engaged for the distribution of medicine and the treatment of cases.

Many co-operative societies and health associations did useful work and undertook the treatment of, and initiated preventive measures against, Kala-azar and malaria. To help poor malaria-stricken villagers inhabiting places remote from dispensaries cinchona febrifuge, supplied by Government, was distributed free through the Presidents of Unions and anti-malarial societies. The 24-Parganas, Howrah, Rajshahi, Mymensingh and several other District Boards started vigorous campaigns against kala-azar. A scheme was sanctioned for kala-azar treatment in Burdwan at an estimated cost of Rs. 4,500 of which Government contributed Rs. 3,000.

Cholera broke out in epidemic form in several districts and the District Boards concerned took prompt measures to cope with these outbreaks. Inoculation with anti-cholera vaccine and disinfection of wells checked in many places the spread of the disease within a very short time. The utility of inoculation was greatly appreciated by the rural people. Measures were taken in several districts to push on intensive vaccination. Free vaccination on the gang system was carried on in Rajshahi from 1,548 depots. There were about 42,000 primary vaccinations and 52,100 revaccinations in that district during the year. It is reported that owing to the want of female vaccinators, comprehensive revaccination of *pardanashin* females could not be undertaken.

Attention was paid to maternity and child welfare work. Some District Boards opened *dai* training centres and held baby shows at which prizes were distributed. The 24-Parganas District Board appointed 3 midwives whose duty it was to visit selected villages in turn and give lessons in the elementary principles of midwifery.

The District Board of Bankura has made a small beginning in tackling the problem of leprosy and should follow it up on the lines of the work, which includes survey and treatment, now being carried on in one centre in the district under Dr. Muir's scheme.

**Veterinary.**

217. The charges under this head increased from Rs. 1·65 lakhs to Rs. 2·09 lakhs, the increase being shared notably by the District Boards of Midnapore, Nadia, Faridpur, Chittagong, Tippera and Rangpur. The expenditure decreased in the 24-Parganas and Noakhali. Cattle disease broke out in the districts of Burdwan, Birbhum, Faridpur, Bakarganj, Dinajpur and Pabna. Two

thousand eight hundred and two animals are reported to have died from contagious disease in Bakarganj alone. Inoculation against rinderpest was performed free of charge by Veterinary Assistant Surgeons in several districts. The Veterinary Assistant Surgeon of the District Board of Nadia did useful work by way of taking prompt steps in the prevention of cattle disease and by teaching people how to treat and prevent such diseases.

New veterinary dispensaries were opened at Tangail, Saidpur (Rangpur) and Darjeeling. A cattle show was held at the Malda social service exhibition. A veterinary stall was opened to carry on propaganda work with the help of poster photographs of well-bred animals. Veterinary instructions and the use of country drugs were explained and demonstrations were given. Mr. L. G. Burrows, District Magistrate of Faridpur, says: "Cattle epidemics were much more efficiently handled in the year under report but constant vigilance will always be necessary to ensure prompt reporting and adequate preventive and curative measures,....." He considers that if a sufficient supply of free serum is forthcoming, the prospects of cattle protection are promising. No real improvement of the condition of cattle, however, can be expected unless the animals are properly fed.

218. The total expenditure under this head rose from Rs. 63·12 lakhs to Rs. 64·81 lakhs. The expenditure on "Buildings," "Communications" and "Establishment" increased by Rs. 98,000, Rs. 60,000 and Rs. 26,000 respectively and that on "Water-supply" fell by Rs. 46,000. The outlay on original works under "Communications" showed an increase of Rs. 1·07 lakhs but the cost of repairs decreased by Rs. 47,000, while in the case of "Water-supply" capital expenditure fell by Rs. 78,000 and maintenance charges increased by Rs. 32,000. Civil Works.

The mileage of metalled and unmetalled roads was 2,513 and 15,447 against 2,495 and 15,305 of the previous year.

The increasing use of motor vehicles, especially omnibuses, in the mufassal made it very difficult for District Boards to maintain their roads in proper condition. The question of road development in India is now being considered by a Committee appointed by the Government of India. In view of the possibility of the levy of some form of taxation on motor-vehicles the proceeds of which will be available to finance road development, the Government of Bengal have asked local bodies to formulate schemes in advance for the reconstruction of roads and bridges so as to make them fit to carry motor traffic.

The income (Rs. 13,794) of District Boards from their roadside trees, etc., remained almost the same as in the previous year. The

expenditure on arboriculture fell from Rs. 26,145 to Rs. 25,736. The number (9,168) of trees planted during the year showed an increase of about 1,100 over that of the previous year. Though nearly one-half of the number died, the number of deaths was less than in the preceding year. The heaviest losses occurred in Burdwan which planted the largest number of trees, and in Bankura Nadia and Noakhali.

The percentage of total lapses to the total budget allotment increased specially in the 24-Parganas (14·8), Jessore (15) and Darjeeling (16·4). The percentage though still high decreased in Burdwan (13·7), Faridpur (11·9) and Pabna (15·7). In Burdwan the large unspent balance of the preceding year which was provided in the supplementary budget estimate could not be economically spent during the year and the long-standing complicated claims of contractors could not be settled. The lapse in Pabna was due to the non-completion of certain works before the end of the year for want of bricks and to the prevalence of cholera and small-pox, which prevented contractors from procuring coolies. No reason was given for the heavy lapses in Darjeeling.

No part of the allotments lapsed in Hooghly and Murshidabad, while Malda largely overspent its grants.

Water-supply.

219. The expenditure on water-supply declined from Rs. 9·1 lakhs to Rs. 8·62 lakhs. Altogether eleven district boards spent larger amounts than in the previous year. Burdwan, Bankura, 24-Parganas, Mymensingh, Pabna and Malda which spent larger sums than their augmentation grants deserve special mention.

In its Resolution on the year's working, Government in the ministry of Local Self-Government considered that the policy of providing new sources of water-supply from time to time in certain favoured places out of the recurring income of the district fund is unwise and will lead nowhere. In the preceding year's Resolution it was pointed out that the provision of water-supply in villages is chiefly a matter for the villagers themselves; and that the portion of a District Board's income which is earmarked for water-supply should be spent in the form of judicious grants-in-aid calculated to stimulate local effort, without involving the district fund in fresh recurring charges for upkeep. The Hon'ble Minister in charge now proposes to inaugurate a policy of capitalizing the amounts which District Boards can spend on water-supply from their yearly income. By raising loans on the security of these allotments they should be able at once to provide a large additional number of sources of water-supply and to enable future generations to share the burden as they will share the benefits.

In Nadia, the District Board grant with the Government contribution was placed in the hands of the Subdivisional Officers who, in open conference with the members of Local Boards, Circle Officers and Presidents of Union Boards, selected sites and had the work done through Union Boards with the help of one-third contribution from the local people, the District Board supervising the construction of wells through its engineering staff. In the 24-Parganas, 191 tube-wells, 3 masonry wells and 3 tanks were completed during the year, while the excavation of 12 tanks and the sinking of 6 masonry wells and 41 tube-wells remained unfinished. In addition a number of tube-wells were sunk by Local and Union Boards. The total number of tube-wells now amounts to 691 and to look after them the District Board maintains a staff consisting of 1 mechanic and 6 mistries. A sum of Rs. 15,000 was spent by the Board to supplement the Government grant of the same amount placed at the District Magistrate's disposal for sinking tube-wells in rural areas through the agency of Local Boards, Union Boards and Union Committees. In Khulna the allotment for water-supply was divided between Local Boards which prepared programmes with the help of the Subdivisional Officers. Loans were also advanced to private individuals for the excavation and re-excavation of tanks. The Hooghly District Board spent Rs. 16,600 in sinking tube-wells, masonry wells and repairs of tanks and wells. This Board received a loan of Rs. 1 lakh from Government for the improvement of rural water-supply. It is hoped that when the scheme of water-supply for rural areas is fully carried out one-fourth of the district will be saved from the scarcity of drinking water. In Dacca the construction of 2 tanks and 40 wells was completed and the construction of 4 tanks and 51 wells was undertaken. The Mymensingh District Board sank 64 masonry wells, 143 tube-wells and 14 ferro-concrete wells and 1 tiled well and excavated 2 tanks during the year. The Board employed 1 permanent and 1 temporary mistri for the repair of tube-wells. The Bakarganj District Board spent Rs. 24,170 on excavation of new tanks and Rs. 6,080 on maintaining those in existence. It excavated 6 tanks and undertook the excavation of 15 tanks during the year. Altogether there are 315 reserved tanks under the control of the Board excluding 68 other tanks excavated with the help of contributions from the Board. Reference was made in the Resolution for 1925-26 to certain suggestions made by the Magistrate of Mymensingh regarding the use of tube-wells. These suggestions were examined in the Public Health Department and a pamphlet (in English and Bengali) explaining the mechanism of a tube-well and how to effect repairs at a cheap cost, was prepared by the Department, and circulated to all District Boards and Municipalities in Bengal.

Closing balance.

220. The year closed with an actual balance of Rs. 17·8 lakhs against Rs. 21·7 lakhs of the previous year. There were heavy balances in the District Board of Burdwan (Rs. 2,49,637), Hooghly (Rs. 1.07,380) and the 24-Parganas (Rs. 3,01,550) while the District Boards of Jessore (Rs. 9,313) and Noakhali (Rs. 4,207) closed the year with unduly low balances. The heavy balance in Burdwan was largely due to the dislocation of work caused by the dismissal of the late District Engineer and that in Hooghly was due to the receipt of a loan of Rs. 1 lakh from Government in the last part of the year which could not be expended before its close. Of the heavy balance at the credit of the 24-Parganas District Board, Rs. 2,71,000 represented unspent balances under "Education," "Medical," "Civil works" and other heads and receipts amounting to Rs. 86,000 over budget expectations. The Nadia District Board closed the year with a debit balance. This was mainly due to a large legacy of debts left by the old Board.

General remarks.

221. The administration of District Boards was on the whole carried on satisfactorily under the guidance of non-official Chairmen, most of whom evinced a real interest in the affairs of the Boards though, as a rule, they are unable to do as much touring as is desirable to control the outdoor work of their officers.

In the case of some District Boards the Chairmen are not regular residents in the districts and thus are not in a position properly to attend to the work of the District Boards, namely, to conduct meetings and to supervise the work of the office and of the Boards' subordinates.

The Commissioner of the Presidency Division observes:—

"Harmony generally prevailed among the members throughout the year except in the case of 24-Parganas where.....partisan spirit played a considerable part in the working of the Board and was accentuated during the elections. Election disputes were a common feature in the reconstitution of the Boards and were an indication of the growing interest which the public are taking in the affairs of the local bodies. But the inordinate delay in disposing of them considerably hampered work. In the matter of rural water-supply the District Boards freely co-operated with the Government officials and generally supplemented allotments made from Government grants for improvement of water-supply in rural areas."

The increase of the number of anti-malarial and health societies indicates that the District Board propaganda has to a certain extent succeeded in rousing the public. Some of these societies formed on co-operative lines with Government grants are reported to be doing excellent work.

## Marine Department.

Port of Calcutta.

222. The experimental working of a Wireless Direction Finding Station continued throughout the year. The station was removed in February, 1927, from Saugor Island to Chingrikhal, a place higher up the river, where owing to the existence of facilities of telephonic communication bearings can be asked for and given within a few minutes.

The Bill to amend the Calcutta Port Act, 1890, to provide for increased representation of Indian commercial interests on the Port Trust was passed into law.

The work on the King George's Dock made steady progress. It is expected that the Dock will be opened to traffic towards the end of 1928.

The sanction of the Secretary of State was received to the scheme for a time-scale of pay for the Bengal Pilot Service, the members of which had hitherto been paid by a percentage of the fees levied on ships for piloting them up and down the river.

In order to strengthen the superior staff of the Shipping Office a new post of Deputy Shipping Master was created.

Agent for Government Consignments.

223. The office of the Agent for Government Consignments, which had been under the administrative control of the Marine Department of the Government of Bengal, since 1909, was abolished with effect from the 1st April, 1927, as the landing and shipping work of the Army Department which formed 70 per cent. of the work of the Agent for Government Consignments, was taken up by the Embarkation Supply Officer at Calcutta.

Repairs of Government launches.

224. The River Police Repair Yard at Nabiganj was transferred to the control of the Marine Department with effect from the 1st April, 1926, and most of the pooled launches and the River Police launches are now repaired there.

## The Calcutta Port Trust.

Port and Port approaches.

225. Apart from the usual seasonal fluctuations, the condition of the navigable channels was good. The Diamond Sand Buoy was moved to a position in transit with the Tower light and the outer Dalrymple light to define the head and tail of the Diamond Sands, while a new light replaced the outer Dalrymple light to define more clearly the Dalrymple Lump. An additional gas buoy was laid on the edge of the Diamond Sands.

Trade.

226. The total tonnage of vessels entering the port was 6,972,426 tons, an increase of 8 per cent. over that of the preceding year. The total tonnage leaving the port was 6,961,171 tons or an increase of 9·4 per cent. over that of the previous year. The total

imports at the docks and the jetties amounted to 1,418,874 tons. The tonnage of exports, exclusive of coal, was 1,465,854 tons against 1,494,442 tons in the previous year. The shipment of coal amounted to 2,476,794 tons or 6,80,385 tons over that of the preceding year. The noticeable increase was partly due to the coal strike in the United Kingdom, but was more largely caused by a permanent improvement in the demand for Bengal coal at other ports. There was an improvement of 11 per cent. in the export of tea.

**Revenue.**

227. The year opened with a balance of Rs. 5,37,544. The receipts of the Port Trust for the year amounted to Rs. 3,12,02,182 which included a sum of Rs. 7,65,049 due to the appreciation of Sinking Fund Securities. The total expenditure was Rs. 2,86,79,450. Out of the surplus a sum of Rs. 25 lakhs was transferred to the Revenue Reserve and Fire Insurance Fund.

**Capital.**

228. The opening balance on capital account was Rs. 26·03 lakhs, added to which receipts on account of loans and the sale proceeds of certain land, buildings, materials, etc., made a total available sum on capital account of Rs. 240·91 lakhs. Against these capital receipts, there was a total expenditure of Rs. 168 lakhs, leaving a balance of Rs. 72·87 lakhs on the 31st March, 1927.

The principal item of expenditure during the year was on the first section of the King George's Dock, on which the sum of Rs. 146·38 was expended, raising the total amount spent on that scheme up to 31st March, 1927, to Rs. 673·40 lakhs against the sanctioned estimate of Rs. 830·62 lakhs for the whole work.

**General matters.**

229. The experimental working of a Wireless Direction Finding Station continued throughout the year but on the advice of Government Wireless authorities the station was removed in February, 1927, from Saugor Island to Chingrikhal, where it has been found possible to obtain direct telephonic communication, with the result that bearings can be asked for and given within a few minutes.

During the year under review the Calcutta Port (Amendment No. 11) Act, 1926, was passed with a view to the wider representation of Indian commercial interests on the Port Trust. The number of members representing these interests was increased from one to four.

## Howrah Bridge.

230. The year under review opened with a credit balance on revenue account of Rs. 1,10,614. The income for the year amounted to Rs. 4,48,326 and the expenditure to Rs. 3,94,805 including a

special item of expenditure of Rs. 41,271 on the substitution of lattice girders for the existing bow string girders of the bridge.

During the year the bridge was opened on 297 occasions of which 48 were day and 249 were night openings.

## Pilotage of the Port and Survey of Vessels.

231. During the year under review there were 57 Pilots and Leadsmen on the cadre against the sanctioned strength of 74. No Leadsman was appointed during the year. There were four reductions, *viz.*, two retirals, one resignation and one death. Bengal Pilot Service.

232. The number of vessels piloted during the year was 1,276 inwards and 1,282 outwards as compared with 1,192 vessels inwards and 1,176 outwards for the previous year. The number of vessels detained at the Sandheads for want of pilots was nil, against one in the previous year. Vessels piloted.

The pilotage receipts for the year amounted to Rs. 12,31,816 against Rs. 13,75,870 and Rs. 13,91,607 for the two preceding years.

233. The total number of vessels surveyed during the year was 460, excluding Government vessels, and the fees realised amounted to Rs. 54,540. Survey.

## Shipping Offices, Calcutta and Kidderpore.

234. The receipts of the shipping offices during the year were Rs. 1,44,297 and the expenditure, Rs. 95,294 against Rs. 1,38,117 and Rs. 86,276, respectively, for the preceding year. Finance.

The number of seamen of all nationalities shipped and discharged by the shipping offices during the years was 56,575 and 50,361, respectively; the number of seamen shipped and discharged by different consulates at Calcutta was 2,786 and 2,475 respectively, making a total of 59,361 seamen shipped and 52,836 discharged, against the totals of 55,844 and 47,346, respectively, for the previous year. Seamen shipped and discharged.

## Port of Chittagong.

235. His Excellency the Governor during his visit to Chittagong in August, 1927, announced the decision of the Government of India to declare the port as a major port as soon as the necessary legislation on the subject was effected.

## Chittagong Port Trust.

Finance.

236. The ordinary income of the Port Trust for the year under review amounted to Rs. 6,77,404 against Rs. 7,03,854 of the previous year, the decrease being mainly due to smaller income from river dues.

The ordinary expenditure was Rs. 5,59,303 against Rs. 4,31,191 of the previous year, the increase being mainly attributable to the contribution of Rs. 1,04,885 to the capital works executed during the year and the payment for cost of repairs to the dredger "Karnafuli."

Trade.

237. The total value of the trade of the port fell from Rs. 14,32,31,066 in the preceding year to Rs. 14,18,31,963 in the year under report or by Rs. 13,99,103. This fall is attributable to a heavy decline in the coasting imports of grain and pulse, principally rice and paddy from Burma, combined with the fall in the prices of raw jute and cotton. The total value of the foreign trade during the year was Rs. 939·7 lakhs against Rs. 832·48 lakhs in the preceding year, or an increase of 12·87 per cent. This rise in foreign trade was mainly due to the increased importation of railway materials, iron or steel, cotton piece-goods, machinery and mill work, hardware and cutlery as well as to larger exportation of tea.

Shipping.

238. During the year the total number of vessels entering the port was 796 of which 228 were ocean-going steamers, 563 inland steamers and 5 sailing vessels with gross tonnage of 802,557 tons. In the preceding year the total number of vessels entering the port was 806 with a gross tonnage of 870,225 tons.

The number of departures from the port during the year was 807 with a gross tonnage of 809,665 tons, against 819 and 877,429 tons in the previous year.

Survey.

239. The total number of vessels surveyed and number of certificates issued during the year were 97 and 89, respectively.

## Shipping Office, Chittagong.

Finance.

240. The receipts of the Shipping Office, Chittagong, during the year were Rs. 973 and the expenditure, Rs. 1,332 against Rs. 874 and Rs. 1,005, respectively, for the previous year.

Seamen shipped and discharged.

241. The number of seamen of all nationalities shipped and discharged during the year was 223 and 504, respectively, against 107 and 619 in the previous year.

# CHAPTER IV.—PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

## Agriculture.

[Report on the operations of the Department of Agriculture, Bengal, for the year 1926-27].

Administration.

242. Mr. R. S. Finlow, Director of Agriculture, was in charge of the department throughout the year.

Government have approved a proposal for the appointment of 7 additional District Agricultural Officers and provision of funds is awaited. An increase of the number of demonstrators by ten has also been sanctioned as a temporary measure pending further consideration of the question as a whole.

The Royal Commission on Agriculture examined a number of witnesses in Calcutta, including the Director of Agriculture and Assistant Director of Agriculture, and visited a typical village in the 24-Parganas. They visited Dacca in January, 1927, where they inspected the Farm and attended an agricultural exhibition.

Agricultural Education.

243. The position of the proposed Agricultural Institute at Dacca is as before, *i.e.*, the scheme is to go on, and a commencement with the construction of buildings will be made when funds are available. It is expected that the Royal Commission will have something to say on the standard for entrance to this Institution, and on other matters connected with the scheme. Its views are therefore awaited with much interest.

The Secondary Agricultural School at Dacca shows no improvement in numbers. With room for 30 students, it contained only 10. It seems that unless there is a prospect of Government employment at the end of it, there is at present no demand for the purely agricultural education which this school affords.

A start will be made in the near future in the training of teachers to enable them to give agricultural instruction in high English and middle English schools on the Punjab system. This training will be under the control of the Agricultural Department and will be given at the secondary school at Dacca, in close collaboration with the Education Department. It is expected that the first course will commence from 1st January, 1928, with 15 teachers selected from different schools.

Agricultural instruction at the elementary stage in primary schools remains unsatisfactory.

Research and experiment.

244. The preparation of artificial farmyard manure has been undertaken with success and on a much larger scale than before. Three thousand maunds were prepared at the Dacca Farm in the

year 1926-27 and probably for the first time in its history the farm had a sufficiency of manure.

The importance of fodder crops has not been overlooked. The popularity is increasing of Japanese millet, a quick growing crop which can be sown early in the year and will give two good cuttings within 8 or 9 weeks of sowing. Favourable reports on its merits have been received. As a pasture, the possibilities of Natal grass, which has the advantage of not drying up during the dry months, are being investigated.

In the Chemical Section soil survey and analysis have been successfully continued, the work being much facilitated by the introduction of a rapid and simple method of mechanical analysis recently brought out in England.

As regards cane, the tough Mauritius or *Tanna* variety, which was introduced by the department about 9 years ago, and rapidly replaced the less productive local varieties, is now about to give way in its turn to C. O. 213, a cane evolved at the Government cane-breeding station at Coimbatore, some two years ago and now in course of distribution.

Agricultural stations and farms.

245. The buildings at Malda and Rangamati are practically complete, while reclamation has made progress at Dinajpur and Mainaguri. Schemes for district farms at Krishnagar and Baraset are nearing completion, while the khasmahal area in Barisal of about 200 bighas known as Char Badna has been handed over to the Agriculture Department and will be cultivated by means of *bargadars* under supervision of the department.

The success of the Kishoreganj Farm deserves special mention. A small area of land acquired by Government for the proposed new civil station, was handed over to the department in the year 1923. The cultivation was done by ordinary cultivators who were paid for their labour in kind out of the proceeds of the crops. No expensive buildings were required and the outlay was insignificant. Only departmental crops were grown, and their value has now been appreciated in the neighbourhood to an astonishing extent. The area under sugarcane increased from a few hundreds to about 12,000 acres in 4 years, all under departmental *Tanna*: seven-eighths of the jute in the neighbourhood is grown from departmental seed, and departmental paddy is making rapid progress. The farm at Jamalpur, which is run on the same lines, came into full working order during the year, while a commencement has been made at Company Bagan, Krishnagar, and in the Char Badna khasmahal.

Seed distribution.

246. The main lines of seed distribution are, naturally, jute and paddy. In spite of last year's heavy crop and the consequent

low prices for fibre, 3,708 maunds of departmental jute seed were sold as against 2,800 maunds in the previous year.

The same system of distribution was continued, *viz.*, sales were made through the Government selling agent after test of every bag by the Fibre Expert for germination and cleanliness. This distribution was guaranteed against loss by the Calcutta Jute Mills Association. During the year under report the London Jute Association contributed Rs. 20,000 for free distribution of departmental jute seed, and this will result in a large increase in the use of improved varieties. The aim of this scheme of distribution, which has been tried before with success, is to increase production, without increasing the area of land under jute. The Director naturally expects that the increased use of high yielding departmental seed will eventually result in the release of land for other crops, unless of course the demand for jute likewise increases.

There has been a great increase in the number of local paddy seed farms run by private growers. It may however be necessary to curtail their numbers if supervision is to be effective and purity and germination, an essential point, are to be guaranteed; while the question of storage is a great difficulty except with the wealthy culivators or with local bodies and associations. At the same time this system offers at present the most feasible method of introducing departmental paddies into the enormous tract that carries this crop in Bengal; and also an important, if not essential, advantage is that seeds are locally grown in the tract to which they are suited. It seems that much can be done in the matter of storage by collaboration with the Co-operative Department; and in fact arrangements on these lines have already been carried out in several instances.

247. Mr. F. J. Gossip, the Live Stock Expert, took charge of his office only one month before the close of the year. Since then he has worked out a scheme for the improvement of cattle in Bengal, and this has been accepted as an experimental measure by Government. **Cattle, Improvement of:—**

Excellent work has been done in the past especially at Dacca, as the demand for Dacca-bred stock proves, but among Bengal's 25 million cattle there is obviously a wide field for work. At present on this, as on the other sides of the department's activities, the work is mainly educative, but the improvement noticed in the case of cattle among the cattle-keepers who supply the Co-operative Milk Union in Calcutta is sufficient proof that, if it is made worth their while, Bengali cultivators will become alive to the importance of improving their stock and keeping it under

good conditions. There is much prejudice, however, and a vast mass of ignorance to be overcome.

As before, cattle breeding by the department was carried out at the Dacca and Rangpur Farms. Reports from Rangpur show an increased demand for breeding bulls. The year was an unfortunate one in the way of casualties, 17 head being lost in various ways.

From Dacca, 7 Sindhi bulls were sent out during the year to various purchasers. The herd suffered from disease during the year and there were 10 casualties owing to foot-and-mouth disease and other causes. Proposals to increase the herd in connection with the cattle improvement scheme are under consideration.

**Agricultural associations.**

248. Good work was done by the Presidency Division Agricultural Association together with its district associations; but the associations in the Northern Circle are not flourishing.

**Exhibitions.**

249. Most excellent work was done by this method of propaganda during the year, the two most notable exhibitions being that at Dacca at the time of the visit of the Royal Commission and that given on the Eastern Bengal Railway's exhibition train. The former was most successful and reflected great credit on its organisers, notably on Mr. Carbery, the Agricultural Chemist.

**Sericulture.**

250. The Government nurseries were occupied as usual with the production and distribution of disease-free *Nistari* and *Chotopolu* seed. Pebrine infection has been brought to a very low percentage, but flâcherie to whose attacks the healthiest worms are liable is now giving more trouble than pebrine.

The production of seed cocoons was less this year by 179 *kahans* and receipts on this account fell by Rs. 9,050. This was due to a bad season marked by untimely rains, drought and hail: and an outbreak of muscardine disease.

The artificial manure referred to in paragraph 244 above has been introduced into all nurseries, and should help to reduce the cost of fertilising the mulberry plantations, always the heaviest item of expenditure in sericulture. The Agricultural Chemist also reports successful experiments at Dacca in the use of sunn hemp as a green manure for mulberry. The new disinfectant called "E.C." invented by the Imperial Bacteriologist, Pusa, is reported to give as good results as the formalin previously used and at a less cost, the expenditure being reduced by about 9 per cent.

The amount of seed cocoons produced by selected rearers under departmental supervision for sale now approximates

closely to that produced by the Government nurseries, and the quality was satisfactory. The former produced about 19,000 *kahans* and the latter 21,000. It is the policy of the department to extend this system, always keeping in view the necessity of careful supervision and the maintenance of a high quality. In connection with the latter, the production of seed at Government nurseries will have to be continued for a long time to come in order to provide the necessary standard of quality. Malda is at present the only district where sericulture shows real signs of life. The demonstration parties referred to in last year's report were continued with an increased staff and with satisfactory results. The key to success lies in the adoption of cleanly and scientific methods of rearing, and on this the demonstration parties are concentrating. To deal with the problem of marketing a Silk Union has been inaugurated with the help of the Co-operative Department.

Propaganda.

251. The results achieved by the Agriculture Department in the research and experiment of the last 20 years are established as thoroughly sound and good. The present policy is to concentrate mainly on the dissemination of these results; and the success already achieved is proved by the numerous requests that are received from time to time from various places for demonstrators or other expert help.

Quarterly Journal.

252. The department has had for want of staff to discontinue the issue of the quarterly journal which was published in English.

## Weather and Crops.

[Season and Crop Report of Bengal for the year 1926-27, Crop Forecasts of Bengal for the year 1926-27, Agricultural Statistics of India, Volume I.]

Character of the Season.

253. Suitable weather at the beginning of the season favoured preparatory tillage and early sowing of autumn crops; but shortage of rainfall in April, May and June delayed completion of *kharif* sowings, especially in the West Bengal districts, retarded the growth and development of germinated crops, and hindered sowing of seed beds and preparatory tillage for transplanted winter paddy. Heavy monsoon showers in July greatly helped transplanting operations and good progress was made, but excessive rainfall in August, and consequent flood, caused damage to autumn and winter paddy crops in some West and East Bengal districts. In North Bengal drought in late August delayed transplantation; but favourable rainfall in September and the early part of

October again improved the situation, and facilitated preparatory tillage for, and sowings of, spring crops. Subsequent drought till the third week of December followed by heavy rain at the end of the month, and in January and February, was generally beneficial to late spring crops, though damage was done to some early maturing crops. On the whole the season was a fair one for all crops.

The following table furnishes the estimated area and outturn in 1926-27 of *bhadoi*, *aghani* and *rabi* crops as compared with the corresponding estimates of the previous year:—

| Name of harvests. | Normal area in acres. | Area cultivated during 1925-26 in acres. | Area cultivated during 1926-27 in acres. | Taking 100 to represent the normal outturn per acre how much represents the outturn for the year. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 1925-26. | 1926-27. |
| *Bhadoi* .. .. | 9,324,200 | 8,750,400* | 9,241,600* | 73 | 78 |
| *Aghani*— | | | | | |
| Winter rice .. .. | 16,940,700 | 15,619,300 | 14,290,300 | 92 | 85 |
| Sugarcane .. .. | 207,600 | 215,000 | 200,800 | 85 | 80 |
| Other sugar producing plants .. | 55,800 | 56,800 | 51,000 | .. | .. |
| *Rabi* .. .. .. | 4,546,800 | 3,818,800 | 3,876,000 | 76 | 77 |
| Total .. | 31,075,100 | 28,460,300* | 27,659,700* | | |

* Revised.

**Bhadoi Crops (excepting Jute).**

254. Favourable rainfall in March facilitated field operations and early sowings, but subsequent prolonged drought in the next three months tended to hinder further sowings and to retard the growth of germinated crops. The monsoon improved matters though the fall in August was excessive, resulting in some damage by flood in several West and East Bengal districts. A fair crop was reaped for the province as a whole.

The outturn of the different *bhadoi* crops for the Presidency was esitmated at 78 per cent. of the normal as against 73 per cent. last year.

**Jute.**

255. Early weather conditions were favourable on the whole. In spite of drought till June in the Burdwan and Presidency districts, the acreage sown and the total yield were much the largest on record.

Area and outturn of jute excepting Cooch-Behar and Tripura States were respectively returned at 3,124,410 acres and 9,504,600

bales of 400 lbs. each. These figures have since been revised to 3,314,900 acres and 10,638,300 bales respectively.

Winter rice.

256. Good rain in March facilitated preparatory tillage for deep-water paddy, and, with a continuance of similar conditions, sowings of this crop were completed in East and North Bengal in early April. In West Bengal prolonged drought adversely affected paddy seed-beds in places, but subsequent rains facilitated transplanting. In early August heavy rain with some flood occurred. The flood soon subsided except in parts of Midnapore, where the crop was considerably damaged. In East and North Bengal, transplanting operations were hampered by lack of timely rain in June and early July but conditions improved later on, resulting in good progress in East Bengal. In North Bengal, drought in late August further delayed transplanting, but favourable rain in early September improved the situation. In West and North Bengal, insufficient rain in October somewhat interrupted the final development of the crop. Subsequent conditions were hopeful; but rain accompanied by high winds in December did damage in districts round the head of the Bay. On the whole, the crop was slightly below normal.

The provincial outturn worked out at 85 per cent. of the normal as against 92 per cent. last year.

Sugarcane.

257. The weather at planting time was generally favourable although subsequent drought and untimely rain affected growth and development to some extent, chiefly in the districts of the Presidency Division, Malda and Mymensingh. In Midnapore the crop was slightly affected by flood in August. The outturn for the Province worked out at 80 per cent. of the normal this year as against 85 per cent. last year.

Rabi Crops.

258. The rainfall in September and the early part of October was adequate for preparatory tillage and sowings, which commenced at the normal time. Drought till the third week of December slightly affected the growth of the early sown crops. Likewise heavy rainfall in the end of December and in the middle of January and February proved detrimental to crops then maturing. On the other hand, later crops were benefited by this rainfall. On the whole, a fair crop was reaped for the Province.

The out turn of the different *rabi* crops for the Province worked out at 77 per cent. of the normal as against 76 per cent. last year.

Cotton.

259. During the initial stages the condition of the crop was not favourable owing to insufficient rainfall. Flood in Midnapore and excessive rain in Tripura State also did damage. In

the Chittagong Hill Tracts the weather was favourable throughout, excepting for rains in January, which caused slight damage. On the whole, a satisfactory outturn was reaped for the province.

The total outturn of cotton (both late and early), excepting Tripura State, was estimated at 22,967 bales this year against 22,959 bales last year.

Area under cultivation.

260. The total cropped area was estimated to be 27,659,700 acres (revised) as compared with 28,460,300 acres (revised) last year.

The figures for the principal crops are shown in the following table:—

| Name of crops. | Normal area in acres. | Area cultivated during 1925-26 in acres. | Area cultivated during 1926-27 in acres. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rice .. .. | 23,113,500 | 21,133,400 | 19,713,900 |
| Other food grains including pulses and *marua* .. .. | 1,771,900 | 1,380,800 | 1,361,900 |
| Jute .. .. | 2,310,300 | 2,680,200* | 3,314,900* |
| Oilseeds .. .. | 1,488,000 | 1,053,000 | 1,096,900 |
| Tobacco .. .. | 241,800 | 293,400 | 295,200 |
| Sugarcane .. .. | 207,600 | 215,000 | 200,800 |

* Revised.

Prices.

261. The price of rice remained high throughout the season. As a result of a record outturn this year, jute prices, which were unprecedentedly high at the beginning of the year, gradually fell to a moderate level.

## Co-operative Societies.

[Report on the working of the Co-operative Societies in Bengal, for 1926-27.]

Administration.

262. Mr. J. M. Mitra held the office of Registrar of Co-operative Societies throughout the year.

Development.

263. The total number of societies at the end of the year was 15,439 as against 12,819 in the preceding year. There was an increase of 2,620 societies against 1,738 in the preceding year. The percentage of increase works out to 20·4 against 15·6 of the previous year. The number of members rose from 453,031 to 547,325 or by 20·7 per cent. against 17·4 per cent. in 1925-26. The total working capital of all the societies rose from

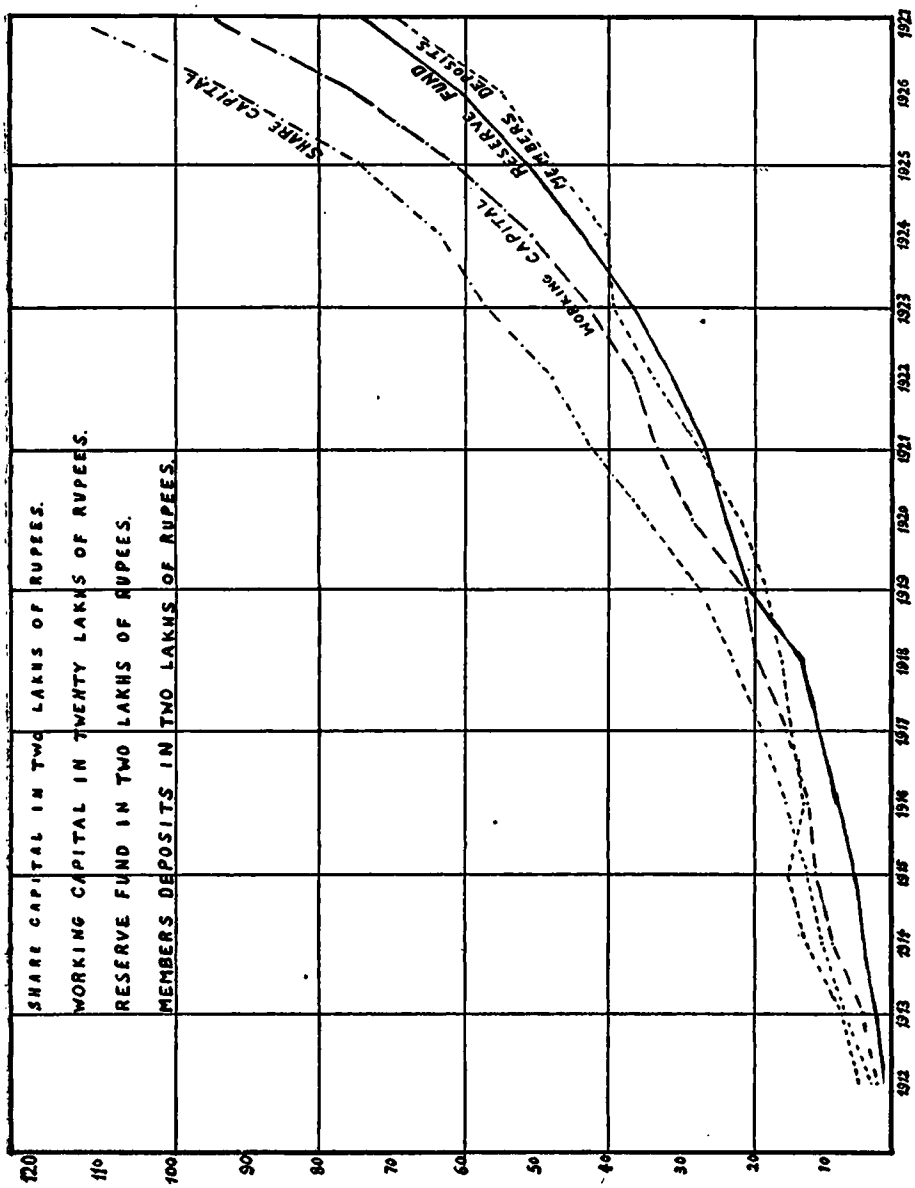
Rs. 7,52,77,018 to Rs. 9,43,42,218 but omitting items which have been taken more than once owing to interlending among societies, the actual cash employed in the movement rose from Rs. 4·23 crores to Rs. 5·15 crores. Thus there was an addition of nearly a crore of rupees to the working capital of the movement. Out of the actual cash employed in the movement a little over 2 crores came from members.

264. This apex bank well maintained its record of progress. There was a considerable expansion of the volume of its business and it had a turnover of about Rs. 5 crores. The following figures illustrate the progress made by the Bank during the year as compared with the preceding year:— The Bengal Provincial Co-operative Bank, Limited.

| | Year under report. | Preceding year. |
|---|---|---|
| Membership .. .. .. | 149 | 136 |
| Working capital .. .. .. | 1,18,24,793 | 75,30,530 |
| Share capital .. .. .. | 10,50,175 | 6,98,425 |
| Deposits from societies .. .. .. | 3,33,441 | 6,70,978 |
| Deposits from Central Banks .. .. | 13,93,439 | 15,87,192 |
| Deposits from non-members .. .. | 88,30,331 | 44,29,826 |
| Reserve Fund .. .. .. | 1,11,649 | 79,876 |
| Other funds—special reserve, building funds, etc. | 1,05,758 | 64,233 |

The increase in deposits testifies to the undiminished confidence which the Bank continues to enjoy. On 30th June, 1927 it had Rs. 45·91 lakhs in Government paper against which it had drawn Rs. 39·34 lakhs. For the first time since its establishment, the Bank found difficulty in meeting fully the loan requirements of the central societies affiliated to it, and its issue of new loans increased from Rs. 41·10 lakhs to Rs. 82·40 lakhs. The repayment of loans rose from Rs. 32·75 lakhs to Rs. 52·79 lakhs while advances were Rs. 4·27 lakhs against Rs. 2·53 lakhs. The Bank continued to work satisfactorily and its relations with its affiliated societies were all that could be desired.

265. The number of Central Banks rose from 98 to 103. The total number of affiliated societies increased from 11,152 to 13,235 or by 18·6 per cent. and the total working capital from Rs. 2,49,41,469 to Rs. 3,03,22,481 or by 21·6 per cent. Although deposits from non-members rose from Rs. 1,53,86,865, to Rs. 1,70,06,188 there was a fall from 61 to 56·08 per cent. in the proportion which these deposits bear to the total working capital. Central Banks.


SHARE CAPITAL IN TWO LAKHS OF RUPEES.
WORKING CAPITAL IN TWENTY LAKHS OF RUPEES.
RESERVE FUND IN TWO LAKHS OF RUPEES.
MEMBERS DEPOSITS IN TWO LAKHS OF RUPEES.
SHARE CAPITAL
WORKING CAPITAL
RESERVE FUND
MEMBERS DEPOSITS
120
110
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
1912
1913
1914
1915
1916
1917
1918
1919
1920
1921
1922
1923
1924
1925
1926
1927

Similarly, although the paid-up share capital increased from Rs. 29,57,796 to Rs. 35,63,460 and the reserve funds from Rs. 13,20,276 to Rs. 15,51,899 the proportion of share capital *plus* reserve fund to the total working capital declined from 17·1 per cent. to 16·8 per cent. The loans advanced by the Provincial Bank to the Central Banks rose from Rs. 49·37 lakhs to Rs. 77·44 lakhs. New loans issued by Central Banks to their affiliated societies fell from Rs. 2·41 crores to Rs. 2·02 crores while repayments to Central Banks declined from Rs. 2·05 crores or 116·6 per cent. of the loans outstanding at the beginning of the previous year to Rs. 1·53 crores or 71·6 per cent. during the year under report. The fall in collections is due to the unsatisfactory agricultural and economic conditions during the year, and particularly to the slump in the jute market. The profits earned by the Central Banks rose from Rs. 4,82,934 or 1·9 per cent. of the working capital to Rs. 6,10,025 or 2·01 per cent. The cost of management rose from Rs. 3·39 lakhs to Rs. 3·98 lakhs but the proportion which the cost bears to the total working capital was 1·3 per cent. as in the preceding year.

Agricultural credit.

266. The proportion of agricultural credit societies to the total number of societies declined from 87·3 per cent. to 86·6 per cent. The provision of easy credit facilities still continues to be the principal need of cultivators and many societies of special types continue to work mainly on a credit basis, though an increasing number of the latter class have begun to combine other functions also. There was an increase in the number of agricultural credit societies from 11,169 including 33 grain banks to 13,398 including 32 grain banks. There was an increase in the total number of members from 280,503 to 329,765 but the average membership of a society remained practically the same. The question of increasing the membership of societies continues to receive attention. The total working capital increased from Rs. 2,66,53,753 to Rs. 3,20,83,931. Share capital rose from Rs. 19·99 lakhs to Rs. 26·02 lakhs, members' deposits from Rs. 11·21 lakhs to Rs. 12·76 lakhs and reserve funds from Rs. 35·33 lakhs to Rs. 43·49 lakhs. While the increase in the total of society owned capital from Rs. 67·50 lakhs to Rs. 82·27 lakhs is satisfactory, it is equally gratifying to note that non-members' deposits rose from Rs. 10·23 lakhs to Rs. 12·28 lakhs. This is an index of the fact that the public confidence which these societies inspire remained unimpaired. In spite of all these facts, however, the societies continued to be mainly dependent on the Central Banks, from which the bulk of their working capital was derived in the shape of loans which rose from Rs. 1,78,76,083 to Rs. 2,54,64,135. The dues collected by these societies during the year amounted to Rs. 79·93 lakhs against Rs. 79·95 lakhs

in the preceding year, but the proportion of the collection to the total amount due at the beginning of the year fell from 45·5 per cent. to 37·8 per cent. The poorer collection was due to the unsatisfactory agricultural conditions which obtained during the year, and particularly to the low price of jute and the poor outturn of the *aman* paddy crop.

**Non-agricultural credit societies.**

267. There was an increase in the number of non-agricultural credit societies, which are mostly on a limited liability basis, from 289 with a membership of 99,300 to 333 with a membership of 105,921. The share capital rose from Rs. 36·19 lakhs to Rs. 40·54 lakhs, non-members' deposits fell from Rs. 57·34 lakhs to Rs. 55·02 lakhs, reserve fund rose from Rs. 7·48 lakhs to Rs. 9·05 lakhs and the total working capital from Rs. 146·11 lakhs to Rs. 164·33 lakhs. The societies themselves provided 63·1 per cent. of their working capital as against 58·6 per cent. in the preceding year. New loans were issued to the extent of Rs. 127·88 lakhs as against Rs. 130·53 lakhs in the preceding year and there was a corresponding fall in the repayment from Rs. 104·74 lakhs to Rs. 103·91 lakhs. The amount outstanding decreased from Rs. 176·69 lakhs to Rs. 152·79 lakhs but out of the amount outstanding the overdues rose slightly from Rs. 10·35 lakhs or nearly 6 per cent. to 10·79 lakhs or 7·06 per cent. The profits earned rose from Rs. 5·13 lakhs to Rs. 6·90 lakhs but the dividend paid did not in any case exceed 12½ per cent.

**Societies other than credit.**

268. The activity noticed last year in the direction of organising sale and supply societies has now had its effects on the figures in connection with these societies. There was a further increase in their number from 53 to 78 or by 47·1 per cent., in their membership from 9,565 to 20,553 or by 114·8 per cent. and their total working capital from Rs. 2,34,828 to Rs. 8,91,844 or by 279·7 per cent. The societies of this class, which have the sale of jute as their principal object, being new organisations have naturally not yet emerged from the stage of experiment. Faced with competition from powerful and well-established concerns organised on a capitalistic basis, having long experience and large resources, these societies have naturally not yet been able to achieve any financial results, but they have succeeded in establishing their marks rapidly and have made on the whole a very promising beginning. Since the close of the year such societies have been federated into a central society at Calcutta called the Bengal Wholesale Co-operative Society. This Wholesale Society has already taken steps to ensure uniformity in the standard of assortment of jute sale societies and its establishment has strengthened the links which the sale societies have been able to forge with the Calcutta market. Of the societies

for the sale of jute, the Pioneer Society at Chandpur has been of the greatest assistance in establishing the mark of these societies with the mills. Of the other societies of this class in the Chittagong Division those at Akhaura, Chowmohani, and Kutubdia were engaged during the year in completing preliminaries. In Dacca Division, the Narayanganj Jute Sale Society which commenced transactions since the close of the year has begun well. The societies at Serajganj, Shahazadpur and Naogaon have applied themselves energetically to the sale of jute. In the Presidency Division, a trained Manager has been appointed since the close of the year with a view to improving the working of the Alamdanga Jute Sale Society. Of the paddy sale societies that at Gosoba in the 24-Parganas, which is the most successful society of this class, had another prosperous year. It earned a profit of Rs. 5,724 paid a dividend of 12½ per cent. and gave a rebate of Rs. 2-8 per *kahan* (that is 13 maunds). It has a reserve fund of Rs. 5,000 and completed the construction of a mill which has been opened since the close of the year. The Taki Sale Society suffered some loss in their paddy transactions. Steps have been taken since the close of the year to put the working of the society on a more economical and businesslike basis.

Irrigation societies.

269. The total number of irrigation societies rose from 350 with a total membership of 12,092 to 377 with a total membership of 13,328. Most of the societies are in the districts of Birbhum and Bankura. There are also 10 in Burdwan, 3 in Hooghly and one in Midnapore. There is one society in each of the districts of Bogra, Faridpur and Khulna. The Khelar Irrigation Society in Midnapore which is the pioneer society of this class continued to do good work. There were 165 irrigation societies with a membership of 7,056 in Bankura as against 170 societies with a membership of 7,073 in the preceding year. The working capital of these societies rose from Rs. 1,69,326 to Rs. 1,72,639. One hundred and twenty of these societies completed their work, 23 did sufficient work to irrigate their lands, 14 did little work and 8 existed in name only. In Birbhum the movement has been making steady progress and the number rose from 168 with a membership of 4,745 and a total irrigable area of 20,060 bighas to 194 with a membership of 5,630 and a total irrigable area of 23,170 bighas. The Kundola, Dadpur, Dowki, Bahira, Mriganayana, and Jamrudh projects have been completed and have proved successful.

Agricultural associations

270. The number of agricultural associations rose from 21 to 30, their membership from 8,249 to 8,724 and their total working capital from Rs. 31,024 to Rs. 42,002. The increase in the

number of societies of this class occurred mainly in the Chittagong Division where the number rose from 1 to 8 during the year. Of these 3 are in Noakhali and 5 in Chittagong. Generally speaking where the Agricultural Department has created a demand for pure seeds, improved appliances and new manures there is little difficulty in establishing these societies. But in consultation with the Director of Agriculture, the policy that has now been settled is to try to get the credit societies in the area to take up the distribution work as a preliminary to the formation of agricultural associations. Where however, there are sale and supply societies, the latter will take up this work on the supply side and separate co-operative agricultural organisations may not be necessary.

Production and sale societies—Milk societies.

271. The number of these societies increased from 76 to 97. The most important group and in fact the group which really counts now is the Calcutta group of societies numbering 82 affiliated to the Calcutta Milk Union. The following table shows the progress made by these societies during the year under report as compared with the previous year:—

| | 1925-26. | 1926-27. |
|---|---|---|
| Number of members .. .. .. | 3,627 | 4,051 |
| Share capital .. .. .. .. | Rs. 7,730 | 10,069 |
| Reserve fund .. .. .. .. | „ 31,278 | 35,844 |
| Owned capital .. .. .. .. | „ 40,123 | 47,430 |
| Total working capital .. .. .. | „ 43,074 | 58,237 |
| Daily yield in maunds .. .. .. | 103 | 110 |
| Outturn per member in seers .. .. | 1·1 | 1·8 |

The yield fell off to 56 maunds during the rains and with a view to minimizing the fluctuation in the daily supply the Union worked during the year in an informal way three societies near Khamargachi in Hooghly where there is an increase in the yield of milk during the rains. A daily supply of about 4 maunds of milk was obtained from this centre. The milk producers received Rs. 1,17,918 for their produce while the societies realised a sum of Rs. 1,54,122 and made a profit of Rs. 12,148.

The Naogaon Ganja Cultivators Co-operative Society Limited.

272. There was a rise in the membership from 3,694 to 3,747 with consequent increase in the share capital from Rs. 42,420 to Rs. 44,940. The working capital of the society stood at the close of the year at Rs. 7,29,965 as against Rs. 5,26,369 in the preceding year. In addition to the stock of 1,993 maunds of old *ganga*,

the society took over 5,256 maunds of *ganja* as against 8,615 maunds in the preceding year. As against an advance price of Rs. 6,07,251 paid in the preceding year, the society paid during the year Rs. 5,72,276. It sold, 4,469 maunds of *ganja* for Rs. 9,42,520 as against 4,496 maunds for Rs. 9,57,435 in the preceding year. The decrease in the sale proceeds is due to a reduction by the Excise Department in the purchase price of *ganja*. As in the preceding year the society spent liberally out of its profits on numerous schemes of public utility in the locality. Perhaps not the least satisfactory feature in the working of the society is the success it has attained in developing a real co-operative spirit among the *ganja* cultivators.

Stores and Supply societies.

273. In pursuance of the policy for the rehabilitation of the stores movement, as indicated in the last report, there was a further decline in the number of stores from 57 to 55, but their membership increased from 9,073 to 9,496 while their total sales rose in value from Rs. 3·76 lakhs to Rs. 5·31 lakhs. These societies worked at a profit of Rs. 5,341 during the year as against a loss of Rs. 4,330 in the preceding year.

Weavers' societies.

274. The number of weavers' societies rose from 233 with a membership of 3,938 and a total working caiptal of Rs. 2,46,553 to 260 with a membership of 4,394 and a total working capital of Rs. 2,97,672. One of the most important groups in this section is that at Bankûra, numbering 60 societies affiliated to the Bankura Industrial Union. These worked satisfactorily on the whole. The Bagerhat Weaving Union which is the pioneer co-operative cotton mill in India was removed from Kandapara to Bagerhat during the year. The Union has organised one branch weaving society of *bhadraloks* at Atharagati where raw yarn is supplied by the Union which also takes the responsibility for the disposal of the finished goods.

Silk societies.

275. The number of cocoon rearers' societies rose from 28 to 41, excluding many societies among this class of operatives which continue to be shown under the head "Agricultural credit societies." Of the 41 societies, 38 are in Malda, 2 in Birbhum and 1 in Rajshahi. The number of reelers' societies fell from 3 to 2, the Gayeshbari Society in Malda having been placed under liquidation during the year. The Dopukuria Society in Murshidabad which reels silk in filature started work during the year. Of the silk weaving societies the Mirzapur Bijaypur Society is in a moribund condition. The working of the Panchagachia Society in Birbhum is not very hopeful, but the Tantipara Samiti worked well and at a small profit. The Ramu Silk Weavers' Society in Chittagong worked satisfactorily.

Fishermen's societies.

276. The number of these societies increased from 92 to 108, their membership from 2,513 to 3,088, and their total working capital from Rs. 36,113 to Rs. 1,19,920. Experience in connection with the working of these societies shows that if they are to make any progress, not only must leases of fisheries be obtained at reasonable rates but arrangements should be made for the speedy transport of the catches to consuming centres and for their preservation during transit. The attainment of these aims will require, apart from much outside assistance, concerted and sustained action on an organised basis on the part of the fishermen themselves and the realisation by them of the identity of their interest with that of their societies. But the fishermen are proverbially backward, and reluctant to work unless driven by immediate pressing necessity, and an improvement in these respects can only be brought about by continued co-operative education.

Village reconstruction.

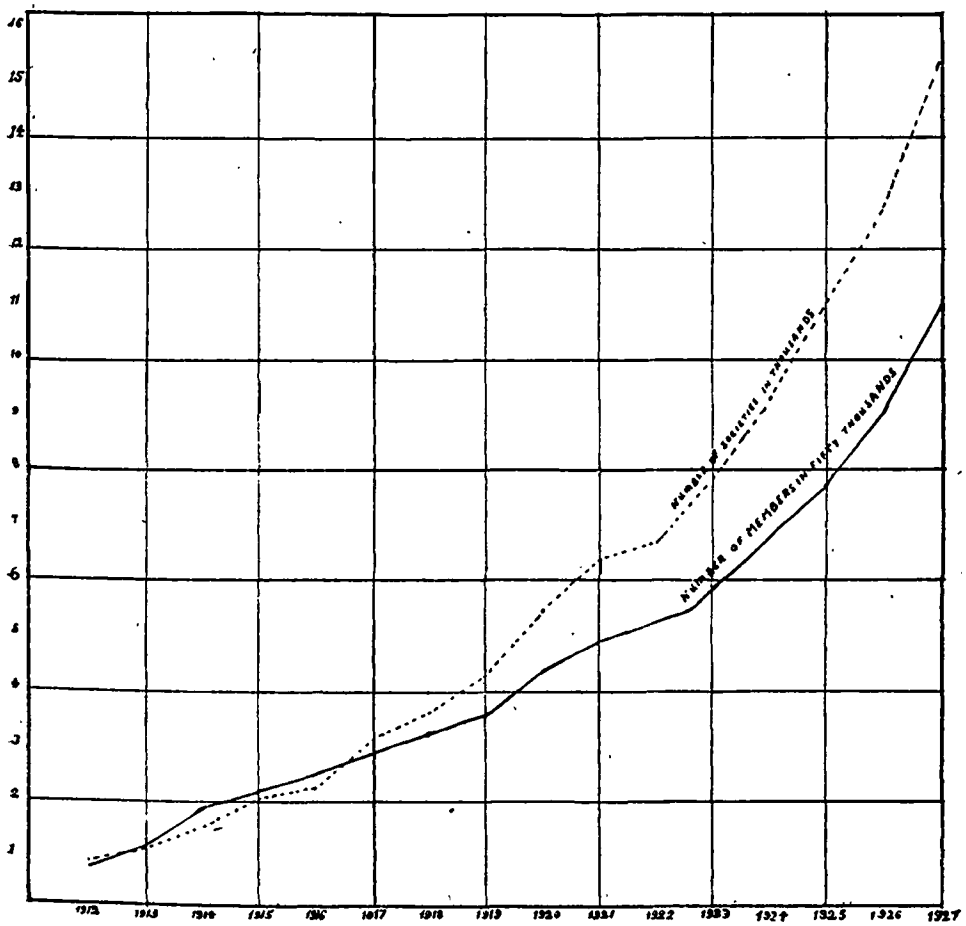
277. The ten Health and Welfare and Village Reconstruction societies organised under the auspices of the Biswabharati at Bolpur in Birbhum which have been shown under the health anti-malarial societies, have been doing good work within their respective spheres by cleaning jungles, constructing drains and village roads and combating the spread of preventible diseases such as malaria, kala-azar, cholera, etc. Some of these societies have opened within their areas primary schools for imparting education to the boys of the depressed classes.

Anti-malarial societies.

278. The Central Anti-malarial Society continues to do useful work. The number of societies affiliated to the central society rose from 269 to 450 out of which 413 societies were registered as against 263 societies in the preceding year. The activities of the central society had been considerably hampered by the withdrawal of the Government grant due to its failure to comply with certain terms regarding the utilisation of the grant. The central society is likely to make better progress if it shows a stronger spirit of co-operation with local bodies particularly with Union Boards, District Boards and Municipalities. The most useful work which the central society has been able to do is to develop a sort of sanitary conscience among members of anti-malarial societies.

Women's organisation.

279. The number of *mahila samitis* rose from 5 to 6, their membership from 84 to 116 and their profits from Rs. 241 to Rs. 259. Four out of 6 of these societies are in the 24-Parganas district. These societies with the solitary exception of the Jallapur *samiti* made satisfactory progress during the year. The Baraset *samiti* opened a midwife class and its members turned


NUMBER OF SOCIETIES IN THOUSANDS
NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN FIFTY THOUSANDS
1913
1914
1915
1916
1917
1918
1919
1920
1921
1922
1923
1924
1925
1926
1927

out very fine *khaddar* which found a ready sale. Of the two societies of this class in Burdwan Division, the Bibarda Society in Bankura has ceased to work as the silk *chuddars* turned out by the members could not find a sale in competition with artificial silk. The society in Midnapore has been organised recently and it has, since its inception, been runnig a girls' school.

The Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society.

280. The society has been doing very useful work. The membership increased from 5,294 to 7,875. The "Bengal Co-operative Journal" and the "Bhandar" have been improved and are now more effective in co-operative propaganda and education; their circulation has therefore increased considerably. The co-operative library and the free reading room opened by the society at the Albert Hall, College Square, has been gaining in popularity and is attended by an increasing number of readers. The arrangement started in the preceding year under which a number of co-operative workers, official and non-official, delivered a course of lectures on co-operation in the social service workers' training class attached to the College Branch of the Youngmen's Christian Association was continued. The society maintained lecturers for propaganda work in different parts of the Province and added to its stock of magic lantern slides with a view to improving the effectiveness of their work. Under the auspices of the society three divisional conferences were held in 1926, one each in the Chittagong, Presidency and Rajshahi Divisions while since the close of the year a fourth divisional conference has been held at Dacca at the time of the visit to that station of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, the members of which attended on the opening day. These conferences were very largely attended and their proceedings which were useful and instructive helped to arouse great popular interest. The society also accorded invaluable assistance to the department in putting up an effective show in the co-operative stall of the agricultural exhibition which was held at the Dacca Farm on the occasion of the visit of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. It also assisted materially in making a good show in the Eastern Bengal Railway demonstration train early in 1927. The propaganda and publicity work carried on by the society has considerably assisted the department in the extension of the movement and the development of new types of societies, particularly sale and supply societies. There are now a number of jute sale societies in the province and these have been federated into the Bengal Co-operative Wholesale Society as already stated. The paddy sale *arath* started by the society with the help of a subsidy from Government in order to help the paddy sale societies in the disposal of their stock has been a success and it will form the nucleus

of a central paddy sale society which is now being organised. To ensure a regular supply of trained men in the future for filling up the managership and other responsible posts in sale and supply societies the society has inaugurated a scheme for the training of Indian apprentice managers and assistants and several apprentices are at the present moment receiving training under the scheme. The society has further prepared a scheme for the training of co-operative supervisors and workers in the principles and practice of co-operation, and in the rudiments of agriculture and a class for the training of Inspectors, Auditors and Supervisors will be started at the Dacca Farm at an early date. These activities augur well for the future, and should help to strengthen and consolidate the co-operative movement throughout the Province.

## Horticulture.

[Annual Report of the Royal Botanic Garden and other Gardens in Calcutta, and of the Lloyd Botanic Garden, Darjeeling, for the year 1926-27.]

281. During the year climatic conditions were varied. The early months were extremely dry and a good many plants died, while in May a cyclone though it lasted only about five minutes overturned some 500 trees including a number of Mahoganies and a big Rain tree. This gave the staff an immense amount of work in clearing away the debris. The Economic Garden was reclaimed and a number of important economic plants sown and planted. For the use of students of Botany a Students' Garden has been laid out in which representatives of the different families are being arranged according to the "Flora of British India." Various measures of improvement such as the extension of the flower garden, repair of the Palm Houses, Orchid Houses and Plant and Propagating Houses as well as the naming and labelling of the plants in the garden were initiated during the year. Royal Botanic Garden.

The work of the Herbarium, which had been suffering for some time showed improvement on the appointment of a permanent Curator in the latter part of the year. A considerable amount of identification work was done when the Officiating Superintendent's collection of Chittagong plants numbering about 3,925 was received from Kew. About 1,275 plants were identified for correspondents in different parts of the Indian Empire and the total number of specimens identified was about 5,200. During the period under review 1,688 plants were distributed to Universities and other Institutions throughout the world. About 800 Herbarium sheets were sent on loan to correspondents in

Paris, Bombay, Sweden, New Zealand and England. Some 2,600 specimens were received from Assam, Burma, the Malay Peninsula, the Philippine Islands, Turkestan, Japan and Washington. Thirty-nine thousand four hundred and twenty plants and 164 packets and 94 lbs. of seeds were distributed.

Calcutta Gardens.

282. The winter season annuals made a fine display and a Singalila Range in October.

Lloyd Botanic Garden, Darjeeling.

283. The rainfall for the year was below normal. No snow fell but frost at night was continuous from December to February. A hailstorm at the end of March did considerable damage to plants. The Curator went on collecting tours to Gangtok in June and to the Jhelap La and Changu in September and to the Singalila Range in October.

## Cinchona Plantation and Factory.

[Report of the Government Cinchona Plantations and Factory for the year 1926-27.]

Plantations.

284. There was no addition to the Government plantations of cinchona which are all in the Darjeeling district. A detailed enumeration of the trees was completed during the year with results which seem to indicate that the system hitherto in force of deducting one acre from the area planted for every 4,000 lbs. of bark extracted, may have given a misleading idea of the area actually requiring cultivation and possibly also of the amount of bark on the plantations. Arrangements have been made for a detailed survey of the plantations and meanwhile the reduction of the book area under cinchona from 3,153 acres to 3,138 must be taken as nominal.

The experiment at Latpanchar has not been an outstanding success, and it is proposed to conduct experiments on a small scale in a part of the Reserved Forest at Samsing in the Kalimpong division. If the rainfall here is not too high, 2,000 acres of very good land should be available.

Outturn.

285. The outturn of bark shows an increase of about 25 per cent. and the quantity worked in the factory was 1,127,519 lbs. against an average of 959,271 lbs. during the preceding three years. The quantity of Java bark received for manufacture was less than in the previous year but still larger than in the years 1923-24 and 1924-25. Altogether 55,136 lbs. of quinine sulphate and 19,197 lbs. of cinchona febrifuge were manufactured during the year besides certain other minor products.

Finance.

286. The quantity of factory products sold during the year was 35,887 lbs. against 42,551 lbs. in the previous year. This

was due to a falling off in the sale of quinine salts. The sale rates of quinine sulphate and other quinine salts which were reduced last year were again further reduced. The receipts from sales amounted to Rs. 5,98,652 and the total expenditure was Rs. 3,89,752. .The profit and loss valuation gave a nominal balance of Rs. 2,57,842 on the loss side. This was due mainly to the exhibition of stock at the end of the year at cost-value instead of at selling price as hitherto. Otherwise, the accounts would show a balance of Rs. 1,37,577 on the profit side. The value of the timber which is only grown to give a rest to the land from cinchona has also been written down during the year. On the whole the financial result was satisfactory.

The accounts system of the department was investigated by an officer of the Auditor-General of India at the end of the year and he has since submitted an elaborate report recommending various changes with a view to the full commercialization of the accounts of the department. On the information at present available it appears that both the plantations and the factory are a prosperous concern from which the Government of Bengal may expect increased profits in the future.

## Forests.

[The Annual Progress Report on the Forest Administration of the Presidency of Bengal, for the year ending 31st March, 1927.]

287. The forests of Bengal lie chiefly along the Himalayan Range in the north, the Sundarbans in the south, and the Chittagong district and the Chittagong Hill Tracts in the south-east. miles under the administration of the Forest Department, against At the end of the year, they covered an area of 10,601 square 10,602 square miles at the end of the previous year. There was thus no material change in area. Out of the total forest area, 5,299 square miles are Reserved forests, 1,857 square miles are Protected forests and 3,445 square miles are unclassed State forests. The Dacca-Mymensingh Division, which has been formed with certain parts of the Attiah forest, belonging to private proprietors, the management of which was taken over by Government during the year 1925-26, was under the management of the Forest Department throughout the year. Administration.

The total outlay on the constitution of State forests in the year under review was Rs. 77,497.

An aeroplane survey of a portion of the reserved forests in the Chittagong Division was completed during the year at a cost of Rs. 50,000. Some petty alterations of the boundaries of the Kalimpong forests entailed the demarcation of 40 miles of new

boundary and 397 miles of the exterior boundaries of the Attiah protected forest were demarcated. No new working plan was taken up during the year.

**Communications and buildings.**

288. The construction and repairs of roads, bridges and paths are essential for the expansion of the activities of the department and on these an expenditure of Rs. 1,03,140 was incurred. The most important road constructed during the year was the Monibhanjang Cart Road in Darjeeling which is calculated to be of great service to traders from Tibet and to the local people as well as to the department. Of the total expenditure incurred, Rs. 36,876 were spent on 29 miles of new cart road, Rs. 11,343 on 90 miles of bridle paths, Rs. 1,712 on 8 miles of other paths and Rs. 9,662 on bridges and culverts; the balance was spent on the repairs of 398 miles of cart roads, 809 miles of bridle paths and 239 of other paths.

The total expenditure on new buildings is Rs. 1,24,140 or Rs. 64,844 more than in the previous year. The greater portion of the amount was utilised on the construction of quarters for the subordinates of the department.

**Silviculture.**

289. The area under working plans has a programme of regeneration for 400 square miles by clear-felling and then planting at the rate of 15 square miles a year. Owing to the difficulty in getting suitable labour, the full programme of regeneration could not be carried out. Only 1,994 acres were taken up during the year, making a total of about 25 square miles as the result of 5 years' working.

**Exploitation.**

290. There was a slight decrease in the value of the timber extracted departmentally, from Rs. 4,87,850 to Rs. 4,83,951. Besides sleepers for the railways and tea gardens, departmental extraction of timber consisted chiefly of the produce of the saw mills at Sukna and Toong. The band mill started at Siliguri in April, 1926, did good work. There was also an increase in the demand for fuel cut and supplied departmentally.

Departmental operations, however, deal with only a small percentage of the timber and other forest produce, which is extracted annually. The bulk is sold standing to purchasers either by auction or on the basis of royalty. During the year also, there was a considerable increase both in outturn and value of the timber sold in this way. The outturn increased from 19·5 million cubic feet to 21·2 million cubic feet; the value also increased from Rs. 15,30,923 to Rs. 18,80,360.

**Financial results.**

291. The financial results were satisfactory. The increased grant which was allowed for the construction of roads and bridges,

essentially necessary for the extension of the activities of the department had a good effect on revenue, which rose from Rs. 28,56,428 in the previous year to Rs. 31,23,841 during the year under review. The total expenditure was Rs. 17,12,954 including Rs. 3,22,682 spent on "Capital outlay" and Rs. 6,21,163 spent on "Conservancy and Works," and the net revenue was Rs. 14,10,887.

## Industries.

[Report of the Department of Industries, Bengal, for the year 1926.]

Administration.

292. Dr. D. B. Meek, and, on his appointment as officiating Director General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, Mr. G. P. Hogg, I.C.S., held charge of the Department during the year. Mr. A. T. Weston, Deputy Director of Industries, went on seven months' leave and Mr. Hogg carried on the duties of that office in addition to his own during Mr. Weston's absence. The head-quarters' staff was brought up to full strength and the Industrial Research Laboratory was completed during the year.

Home Industries.

293. There are two main classes of home industries—(*a*) Spare time occupations which can be taken up by agriculturists or their families, and (*b*) Whole-time occupations which have hitherto been the preserve of special castes or groups. Of the former, demonstrations were given during the year in cane and bamboo work and rope-making from coir and sunn hemp fibre. In respect of the latter, efforts were made by the department to improve the conch-shell, brass and bell-metal, and umbrella industries.

The Bengal Home Industries Association—a body formed in 1917 and under non-official control—is the only organisation in the province for marketing the finished products of cottage and small industries. Its results have hitherto been meagre and its working was the subject of the serious consideration of Government. Steps were taken during the year for its reorganisation.

Industrial Chemist's Department.

294. Experiments on match head composition and damp proofing were continued throughout the year. The examination of *Golpata* nuts as a possible raw material for button making was also undertaken. At the instance of the Collector of Malda, a demonstration was carried out of an improved process worked out by the department for the manufacture of shellac. At the request of the Manager of the Pioneer Match Factory, Dum-Dum, a demonstration extending over several days was carried out at their factory on the bleaching of *Gengwa* wood. The department promptly attended to various requests from industrial concerns for advice and information.

Industrial Engineer's Department.

295. The Industrial Engineer acted as Consulting Engineer to the Technical and Industrial Schools under the department and rendered valuable help in promoting the scheme for the Technical School at Krishnagar and the Silk Institute at Berhampore. His services were constantly requisitioned for technical advice with regard to the design of buildings, layout of workshops, arrangements for water-supply, erection of power plant and the selection of machinery for these institutions. He also dealt with all industrial enquiries requiring engineering knowledge. So far little use has been made of his services in connection with the erection of power plant and factory machinery which the Indian Industrial Commission contemplated should be his main line of employment. He was actively engaged in designing and perfecting labour-saving devices for use in home industries, including one for cutting conch-shells and another for polishing brass and bell-metal articles. These machines were successfully demonstrated in use in some parts of the province. The cottage jute-spinning machine originally designed by the Principal, Government Weaving Institute, and modified and cheapened by the Industrial Engineer, was successfully demonstrated in several jute-producing districts of the province and orders for its supply received. A machine for bending and marking ornamental signs on umbrella handles designed by the Industrial Engineer was also successfully demonstrated in Calcutta and Chittagong.

Weaving Department.

296. Weaving is the most promising home industry in the province, and efforts were continued to popularise the use of the fly-shuttle in preference to the throw-shuttle. The three demonstration parties attached to the Serampore Weaving Institute were actively engaged throughout the year in exhibiting the use of modern methods of weaving in its various branches throughout the province. The demonstration centre of the wool-spinning, blanket-weaving and coir-making industries at Sandwip started in 1924 did good work in removing the prejudices of the people against sheep shearing and in bringing home to them its economic value. The party was also equipped with two fly-shuttle cotton-weaving looms, and one carpet-weaving loom and accessories, both being forms of industry which were new to the island. Eighteen additional peripatetic weaving schools were sanctioned during the year.

Bengal Tanning Institute.

297. Valuable work continued to be done at the Calcutta Research Tannery or, as it is now called, the Bengal Tanning Institute. It was decided to retain this institution on a permanent basis. The two demonstration parties attached to the

Institute were employed in displaying modern methods of tanning at exhibitions and elsewhere. The apprentice course of training at the Institute worked fairly satisfactorily.

Technical Education.

298. The total number of institutions, public and private, was 119 against 113 in the previous year; and the number of pupils attending them was 6,532 against 6,629. The total expenditure, direct and indirect, incurred on these institutions was Rs. 11,59,045 against Rs. 10,81,070 in the previous year.

An important addition was made to the number of institutions for imparting technical education in the Calcutta Technical School which was opened on 1st February, 1926, absorbing the old Calcutta Technical Evening School together with its staff. Some progress was made towards the improvement of the four Government technical schools at Barisal, Bogra, Rangpur and Pabna, the scheme for the reorganisation of the Barisal school being administratively approved. The scheme for the training of passed survey students in mine surveying was sanctioned as a temporary measure for 3 years. A survey class in the Burdwan Technical School was opened in July, 1926. The Indian School of Mines and Geology at Dhanbad was started towards the close of the year and four scholarships were provided for Bengal students for training in this institution. The year witnessed the admission of female candidates for training in the regular higher and lower classes of the Serampore Weaving Institute. Progress was made in setting up machinery and engaging the staff for the Silk Weaving and Dyeing Institute at the old Mental Hospital at Berhampore. District weaving schools at Suri and Khulna were started during the year.

Grant-in-aid.

299. It is the policy of Government to stimulate technical education mainly by means of the system of grants-in-aid. To ensure a steady course of development, Government accepted the principle that the allotment for grants-in-aid should be increased each year by a fixed amount for a period of three years beginning from 1927-28, the grants being made to selected institutions which are designed to further the technical and industrial development of the province.

State Technical Scholarships.

300. Two three-year State Technical Scholarships were awarded during the year for the study of cotton cloth dyeing and soap manufacture, respectively, in England.

## Manufactures and Mines.

Jute.

301. The year 1926-27 shows an increase in the area under jute cultivation including Cooch Behar and Tripura States, the

acreage being 3,170,554 against 2,715,000 in the preceding year. The outturn was 9,621,600 bales against 8,020,700 bales, the revised figure of the preceding year. There were 85 jute mills at work employing on an average 325,190 operatives— a decrease of 4,338 as compared with the previous year. The numbers of looms and spindles at work in the jute mills were 49,773 and 1,054,636, respectively, as against 49,910 and 1,050,684 in 1925-26. The authorised capital in rupees, sterling and dollars was Rs. 20,82,96,000, £2,125,000 and $12,000,000 respectively.

**Cotton.**

302. Twelve cotton mills were at work employing on an average 12,781 persons daily as against 13,559 in 1925-26. The numbers of looms and spindles were 2,919 and 325,894, respectively, as compared with 2,781 and 368,208 in the year 1925-26. The authorised capital was Rs. 2,67,00,000.

**Silk.**

303. There were four silk mills under the operation of the Indian Factories Act employing on an average 372 operatives. The total production of disease-free seed cocoons during the year was 40,083 *kahans*, 21,083 *kahans* being raised by Government nurseries and 19,000 by private agencies under Government supervision.

**Sugar.**

304. The Cossipore Sugar Works is the only sugar factory under the operation of the Indian Factories Act but it remained closed throughout the year. The acreage under sugar crops decreased from 271,800 to 251,800.

**Tea.**

305. The area under tea (including the figures for the Tripura State) in 1926 was 194,697 acres as against 192,998 acres, the revised figures of the preceding year. The quantity of tea manufactured was 95,829,925 lbs. as against 85,279,396 lbs. in 1925. The number of tea plantations totalled 370 employing on an average 165,179 permanent and 10,343 temporary hands. During the year 224 tea factories were under the operation of the Indian Factories Act and the total average number of operatives employed in them was 14,761. This number is exclusive of the persons employed on the gardens outside the factory premises.

**Coal.**

306. The downward trend in the number of collieries worked within the scope of the Indian Mines Act noticed last year continued during the present year, the number falling from 236 to 209. The number of persons employed, however, increased from 42,781 to 43,506, and the total output of coal rose from 4,913,852 tons to 5,137,688 tons.

The number of mines using electrical power was 47 and the total number of mechanical ventilators and safety lamps in use was 14 and 7,575, respectively.

The course of prices was steadily downward, and the produce of many collieries was sold at prices which left very little margin above raising cost. Many of the mines producing the poorer qualities of coal were closed down.

The exports of coal showed a remarkable increase, which to some extent was due to the coal strike in England. A noticeable feature of the year was the increased reputation of Indian coal in export markets caused by the supervision and certification of cargoes by the Indian Coal Grading Board.

307. There were three paper mills at work during the year employing on an average 3,913 persons daily. They produced 25,420 tons of paper valued at Rs. 1,27,98,000. Paper.

308. Only one woollen mill (10 looms and 288 spindles) was at work during the year, employing on an average 142 persons daily. It produced 93,829 lbs. of blankets, valued approximately at Rs. 93,829. It is a Government concern (in the Dacca Jail). Wool.

309. As in the previous year there were two saltpetre refineries at work. These produced 1,839 maunds of saltpetre against 1,356 maunds in 1925-26. No purified salt was educed in the process of refinement and there was no sale of purified salt. A total of 58 maunds of *sitta* (impure salt) was produced at the two refineries during the year. Salt and salt petre.

## Miscellaneous Manufacture in each Division.

310. The depression in the coal industry was rather worse than in the preceding year. In the Asansol subdivision the large paper mill improved its position and there was a general improvement in the condition of the iron and pottery industries. The Bengal Iron Works reopened with two blast furnaces and a large staff was re-employed. In Midnapore district there was a marked increase in the number of rice mills which rose from 12 to 47 during the year. The silk and *tussar* weaving industry in the division languished owing to insufficient demand and general trade depression. The cutlery of Kanchannagar still maintains its old reputation, but the industry is now declining. In the Hooghly district the rice mills and paddy-husking factories worked satisfactorily. Handloom weaving, which is the most important cottage industry in the Serampore subdivision, also prospered in spite of the fall in the price of mill-made cotton goods. Most of the manufacturing concerns in Howrah district were in a flourishing condition. In Burdwan.

the Uluberia subdivision there has been an improvement in the local industries. The manufacture of tiles for which there is a considerable demand has appreciably increased. Similarly there has been a noticeable development in the shoe-making industry. Fly-shuttle handlooms have been introduced in many places of the subdivision and the quality of the outturn has improved.

**Presidency.**

311. During the year the manufactures of this division were in about the same position as in the preceding year. The paint and varnish factory at Sodepore in the 24-Parganas district ceased to exist. The important industries of brass and bell-metal clay-modelling and cotton weaving in the Nadia district continued to maintain their reputation, and bricks, shoes and saddles, conch-shell bracelets and bangles were also manufactured.

**Dacca.**

312. A power-driven hosiery factory was established in the Narainganj subdivision of Dacca district. The match factories in Mymensingh district were in a bad way but the weaving and brass and bell-metal industries in Tangail subdivision continued to thrive. In Bakarganj district the only surviving match factory at Banaripara disappeared during the year. Besides the Bhola and Barisal hosieries, there were also some knitting machines at work at Barisal and other places for the manufacture of stockings, etc. Two oil mills at Jhalakati and Nalchiti are working at a profit whilst one at Bhola has since gone into liquidation and one at Torki Bandar is said to be in working order.

**Chittagong.**

313. The manufacture of umbrella handles in Chittagong and Tippera districts continued, while there was a considerable export of unfinished bamboo sticks for this purpose from Sitakund. *Hookas* and *saris* of Tippera, Mainamati coatings and mosquito nettings and cane baskets and bags of Comilla and Brahmanbaria commanded an extensive sale. In Noakhali an appreciable quantity of *khaddar* and other country cloths were manufactured.

**Rajshahi.**

314. The Tea Industry prospered during the year. The improvement of the silk industry in Malda and Bogra districts continued to be maintained in all its branches, especially in Malda where a co-operative silk union has been established recently. Considerable progress has also been made by means of propaganda in the training of silk rearers in the elementary principles of scientific sericulture. The brass and bell-metal industries in Malda received a set back owing to the depression in agricultural conditions and the lac industry also showed a tendency to decline. In Jalpaiguri a match factory has been started. The manufacture of gunnies and molasses is thriving. The manufacture of *khair* (Catechu) is also carried on extensively. The Industrial School at Kalimpong in Darjeeling district employed over 500 persons.

## Working of the Indian Factories Act, 1911 (XII of 1911).

[Annual Report on the Working of the Indian Factories Act in Bengal, for the year 1926.]

315. One hundred and nineteen new factories were added to the Bengal register during the year and 41 removed from it owing to their having been closed down. The net result was that there were 1,234 registered factories in 1926 as compared with 1,148 in 1925. The average daily number of persons employed in these factories was 550,923 against 551,342 in the preceding year. Jute mills and ship-building and engineering works showed a decrease of 10,750 and 777 workers respectively. The large decrease in jute mills was ascribed to the adoption, in many mills, of a single shift system of work. General engineering works and certain other industries showed various increases. The average daily number of women and children employed was less than in the preceding year and the jute mills were again mainly responsible for the decrease. Child labour was dispensed with in many match factories by the installation of machinery to perform work hitherto done by children. Many instances of the irregular employment of women and children were brought to notice.

One hundred and sixty-eight factories were inspected more than three times, 78 were inspected three times, 200 twice and 545 once during the year. Two hundred and forty-three factories, mostly in the tea districts, remained uninspected, against 291 in the preceding year. The problem of reducing the number of uninspected factories has continued to occupy the attention of Government.

An important administrative measure was introduced during the year in the opening of a branch factory inspection office at Barrackpore. This is the first step towards the creation of suboffices throughout the presidency to facilitate more frequent and regular inspection of factories. The difficulty of inspecting tea factories owing to their distance and difficulty of access will, it is hoped, be overcome shortly by the creation of a branch office for northern Bengal at Jalpaiguri.

The general health of the operatives was good, but epidemics of malaria, beri-beri and dysentery broke out in certain areas. The tendency towards improvement in the general health arrangements of factories continued to be maintained. New or additional septic-tank installations were put into operation in 8 factories and plans for 4 others were approved. Difficulties about the disposal of effulent, however, retarded the progress of certain mills in carrying out important sanitary schemes. Further advance was made in the provision of improved housing and pure drinking water for

factory employees. New and additional tube-wells were sunk in 12 factories.

Wages in general were almost stationary. The employees in match factories, the development of which was commented on in the previous year, were better paid than in other industries. The conversion of many jute mills to the single-shift system was followed, as a rule, by strikes, which, however, were of short duration. The workers settled down to the new conditions and apparently became more contented once they recognised that the rates of wages in the single-shift mills were in no case less than under the multiple shift-system and that in some cases both time-workers and piece-workers earned slightly more.

The number of accidents reported was 3,010 of which 76 were fatal, 1,123 serious and 1,811 minor. This represents a net increase of 330 over the figures of the previous year, but the increase of serious and slight accidents was 214 and 119 respectively, while fatal accidents decreased from 79 to 76. The percentage of all accidents to the total number of factory employees was 0·54. Active remedial and precautionary measures wherever possible were taken by the Inspectors of Factories to prevent a recurrence of accidents.

During the year there were 157 prosecutions under the Act. Of these cases 129 ended in conviction, 12 in acquittal, 3 were withdrawn and the remaining 13 were pending at the close of the year.

## Bengal Steam Boiler Commission.

[Report for the period January to December, 1926.]

316. As indicated last year this chapter deals principally with the operations of the Commission in Bengal only, without any save necessary incidental reference to its work in the other provinces of Bihar and Orissa and Assam.

During the year the Commissioners held thirteen ordinary meetings. To enable the department to cope with the continuous increase of work under the new Act, it has been necessary to retain the temporary inspectors permanently. The total number of boilers on the register in Bengal was 5,226, and of these 191 were struck off. The staff inspected 3,967 boilers in Bengal and found 114 of them out of order. The total receipts during the year amounted to Rs. 2,74,979 including Rs. 1,43,806 realised as fees for the inspection of boilers in Bengal. The total expenditure was Rs. 2,64,906, of which Rs. 1,40,714 was incurred on account of this province. The figures representing the total receipts and expenditure for the previous year were Rs. 2,85,632 and Rs. 2,75,548, respectively.

As observed last year the new regulations continue to work satisfactorily without any inconvenience to industry.

### The Bengal Smoke Nuisances Commission.

317. The Commission held twelve meetings during the year. They continued to devote their attention to adopting the most modern methods governing the scientific use of fuel and utilising the latest achievements in industrial and domestic smoke abatement. The staff took 18,825 observations of smoke, made 5,023 inspections and tests of installations for instructional purposes, disposed of 48 complaints, approved 58 plans of new installations, brought 4,170 minor offences to the notice of the owners and served 22 statutory warnings, but no prosecutions were instituted. General smoke conditions improved by a reduction of the emission of smoke in average figures from 1·19 to ·98 minutes per hour which is the lowest on record.

Public developments which contributed to the general improvement included the installation of 676 motors equivalent to 4,456 horse power within the system of the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation Limited and the fitting by the Oriental Gas Company of 1,415 gas appliances for domestic and industrial use. The effect of these gas appliances, of which there are 10,000 now as compared to 100, twelve years ago, is the prevention of the annual discharge of about 1,800 tons of soot and 700 tons of sulphuric gases into the atmosphere of Calcutta.

### Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 (VIII of 1923).

[Report on the Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act (VIII of 1923) in Bengal during the year 1926.]

318. The benefits of the Workmen's Compensation Act are gradually becoming more widely known, and, during the year under review, active interest was taken by some of the workers' organisations in furthering the claims of their members. Another noteworthy feature of the year is that workers in the coal industry, hitherto inactive, began to realise the benefits of the Act. During the year the Commissioner visited Asansol regularly to try cases locally for the convenience of parties, and in this way the existence of his office became known in the colliery area.

Four applications for compensation (under section 10 of the Act) were pending from the previous year and 54 new applications were filed during 1926 as against 26 in the previous year. Out of these 58 cases all but 7 were disposed of during the year.

Twenty-two cases were contested, in 5 of which compensation was awarded, the remaining 17 being dismissed on various grounds, legal and otherwise.

Three applications for indemnification under section 12 (including 2 pending from the previous year) were disposed of during the year.

One hundred and ninety-two deposits amounting to Rs. 1,22,481 were made by employers under sub-sections (*1*) and (*2*) of section 8 of the Act; six involving Rs. 6,085 were received by transfer from other Commissioners and 28 involving Rs. 19,054 were pending from the previous year. Of these, 35 deposits were for injured workmen, and the remainder for fatal accidents. Out of a total of Rs. 1,47,620 deposited in respect of 226 cases, the sum of Rs. 1,07,762 was paid to workmen or their dependants in respect of 158 cases; Rs. 1,965 was refunded to depositors in three cases there being no dependant under the Act; and Rs. 21,141 was transmitted to other Commissioners in 34 cases, leaving a balance of Rs. 16,752 in the remaining 31 cases. In 17 of these cases no claim was preferred before the close of the year, while 14 cases remained pending for disposal. In addition to a balance of Rs. 15,734 invested at the end of the year 1925 under rule 10 of the Workmen's Compensation Rules, 1924, on behalf of dependants under legal disability a further sum of Rs. 7,603 was invested during the year either in Post Office Savings Bank or Post Office 5-Year Cash Certificates. Out of the total sum of Rs. 23,337, Rs. 7160 was withdrawn and paid to dependants during the year.

Two hundred and twenty-seven memoranda of agreements were presented for registration under section 28 as against 164 in the previous year. Six cases were pending at the close of 1925. Of these 21 cases were for temporary disablement of persons under a legal disability and the rest for permanent disablement. One was registered after modification, 222 were registered as they stood, and one case was transferred under section 20(*2*) leaving 9 cases pending at the end of the year.

One appeal under section 30—the first in this province—was preferred during the year against the Commissioner's decision. The appeal was allowed, the High Court setting aside the Commissioner's order of dismissal and awarding compensation.

Statistical returns under section 16 of the Act were received from 1,406 concerns showing the total daily average number of workmen employed as 636,660. A total compensation of Rs. 1,38,145 is shown in the returns as paid during the year in respect of 1,720 accidents as against Rs. 1,22,780 paid for 1,977 accidents in the previous year.

Accidents resulting in death numbered 109, in permanent disablement 252, and in temporary disablement 1,359, the compensation paid for each type of accident being respectively Rs. 60,621, Rs. 59,265 and Rs. 18,259.

## TRADE.

### Foreign Sea-borne Trade.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal, for 1925-26.]

Trade position.

319. The trade of Bengal during the year 1926-27 was marked by two noteworthy events, *viz.*, (*1*) the coal strike in the United Kingdom, and (*2*) the communal riots in Calcutta. The former, while assisting the export coal trade of Bengal, handicapped her general import business, and the latter for a time threw all Calcutta markets into confusion.

The aggregate value of the sea-borne trade of Bengal (excluding treasure) with foreign countries and Indian ports amounted, during the year under review, to Rs. 259 crores, or Rs. 17·47 crores less than that of the previous year. This decrease was due mainly, if not entirely, to lower prices. But on the other hand the tonnage showed an all-round increase under all heads except that of Dock exports (general) where there was a serious drop in the shipment of seeds.

In the foreign trade, the total decreased from Rs. 238 crores to Rs. 221 crores. Of this, the imports showed an increase by one crore of rupees, and the exports declined from Rs. 154 crores to Rs. 136 crores. The heavy decline in the export trade was due to a general falling off in prices, and especially in those of jute and jute manufactures, and also to the serious drop in the shipment of seeds. On the import side, the large falling off in the price of cotton piece-goods, which form one-third of the total foreign imports, resulting solely from the low value of the raw material, caused a small shrinkage in the total value against a large expansion of yardage. Of the items showing higher value, the increase in the price of salt is noticeable; smaller supplies from the United Kingdom, due to the strike, sent up prices of the other varieties. The prices for sugar made some recovery, and those for kerosine oil improved slightly.

On the export side all items showed lower values except rice, wheat and rape seed, where a paucity of supply raised prices. Jute and jute manufactures, the most prominent item in the export trade of Bengal, decreased in value in spite of increased shipments. The value recorded for tea did not also wholly reflect the increase in quantity. There was, however, considerable improvement in the export coal trade of Bengal, due to the miners' strike in the

United Kingdom, the shipments during the last three months of 1926 constituting a record figure for the port of Calcutta.

In the coasting trade the total fell from Rs. 39 crores to Rs. 38 crores, the deficiency being shared by imports and exports in equal proportions.

## Imports of Merchandise.

320. The following table shows the comparative importance of the principal articles in the import trade of Calcutta. Articles which form less than 0·5 per cent. of the total imports have been omitted from the list:—

| | 1925-26. | 1926-27. | Percentage of proportion to total imports of merchandise. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. | Rs. | |
| Cotton goods | 27,65,36,495 | 27,29,16,008 | 34·06 |
| Metals and ores | 10,15,35,747 | 9,88,55,552 | 12·34 |
| Sugar | 6,67,44,137 | 7,73,07,462 | 9·65 |
| Machinery and mill work | 4,46,89,559 | 4,11,04,702 | 5·13 |
| Oils | 4,01,82,057 | 3,50,77,881 | 4·38 |
| Instruments, apparatus and appliances | 1,46,41,335 | 1,70,39,166 | 2·13 |
| Hardware, excluding cutlery and elec troplated ware | 1,81,69,154 | 1,69,63,374 | 2·12 |
| Spices | 1,44,62,996 | 1,65,10,179 | 2·06 |
| Provisions and oilman's stores | 1,16,74,671 | 1,51,81,010 | 1·89 |
| Motor-cars, motor-cycles and parts thereof | 1,31,54,758 | 1,49,59,378 | 1·87 |
| Railway plant and rolling stock | 2,19,68,164 | 1,16,52,512 | 1.45 |
| Postal articles not specified | 1,00,28,188 | 1,02,52,150 | 1·28 |
| Liquors including methylated and perfumed spirits | 95,47,989 | 98,41,920 | 1·23 |
| Chemicals and chemical preparations | 79,78,654 | 93,77,477 | 1·17 |
| Paper and pasteboard | 80,79,979 | 90,61,863 | 1·13 |
| Salt | 70,31,969 | 89,41,272 | 1·12 |
| Tobacco | 75,10,603 | 87,68,359 | 1·09 |
| Glass and glassware | 83,79,900 | 86,56,133 | 1·08 |
| Woollen goods | 69,78,071 | 74,07,387 | ·92 |
| Artificial silk | 32,40,778 | 74,00,721 | ·92 |
| Drugs and medicines (excluding chemicals and narcotics) | 65,87,591 | 67,23,336 | ·84 |
| Grains, pulse and flour | 29,95,680 | 60,48,385 | ·76 |
| Rubber | 64,11,662 | 59,16,385 | ·74 |
| Paints and painter's materials | 45,61,309 | 54,14,498 | ·67 |
| Tea-chests, entire or in sections | 61,69,353 | 43,46,572 | ·54 |
| Cycles (other than motor-cycles) | 42,91,017 | 41,52,572 | ·52 |
| Other articles | 12,41,58,143 | 7,13,48,039 | 8·91 |
| Total | 79,08,84,178 | 80,12,24,893 | 100·00 |

The important items are separately dealt with in detail in the following paragraphs.

**Liquors.**

321. The total import of all descriptions of liquors amounted to 1,873,000 gallons against 1,627,000 gallons in the preceding year, the total value increasing from Rs. 95·4 lakhs to Rs. 98·4 lakhs. There was an increase in the receipt of nearly all kinds of spirits, liquors, and wines, except whisky, the imports of which declined to the extent of 20,000 gallons, or 10 per cent. The import of rum denatured on arrival also reached the high figure of 356,000 gallons.

**Provisions.**

322. The total value of provisions imported increased from Rs. 117 lakhs to Rs. 152 lakhs. The articles responsible for this

high increase were (*1*) canned and bottled provisions, the value of which advanced from Rs. 43 lakhs to Rs. 73 lakhs, and (*2*) condensed milk from Rs. 11 lakhs to Rs. 12 lakhs. The United Kingdom continued to be the chief supplier, though her position was hotly challenged by the Netherlands, which increased their total supplies from Rs. 13 lakhs to Rs. 54 lakhs, as against the United Kingdom's total of Rs. 57 lakhs.

Sugar.

323. Against a slight increase of quantity in the import of sugar from 314,000 tons against 323,000 tons, there was a considerable advance in value from Rs. 626 lakhs in the preceding year, to Rs. 720 lakhs during the year under report. This was due to firmer prices, as the result of a poorer crop in Java, coupled with other causes. Imports of sugar from Java showed a slight decrease from 309,000 tons to 305.000 tons, but those of beet sugar, the bulk of which came from Germany and Czechoslovakia, increased from 2,115 tons to 11,193 tons. Molasses were imported in much larger quantities, the figures being 86,479 tons against 65,578 tons in the preceding year.

Salt.

324. In spite of a very slight decrease in the imports, the total value advanced from Rs. 77·80 lakhs to Rs. 102·75 lakhs. This sharp rise in the prices was the result of enhanced value of the salt from the United Kingdom, due to smaller shipments owing to the strike, the prices of salt from other countries rising in sympathy. While Aden continued to be the biggest supplier, Germany improved her position considerably, almost doubling the quantity sold, and more than doubling the value realised. The stock in bond on the 31st March, 1927, stood at 43,010 tons against 56,768 tons at the close of the previous year.

Tobacco.

325. Imports of tobacco advanced from 3,793,709 lbs. valued at Rs. 75·11 lakhs to 4,542,581 lbs. valued at Rs. 87·68 lakhs. This increase was due to increased imports of both unmanufactured and manufactured tobacco, the former rising from 2,595,359 lbs. to 3,049,070 lbs. and the latter from 1,198,350 lbs. to 1,494,211 lbs. The import of pipe tobacco, however, fell off slightly.

Mineral oil.

326. The total quantity of mineral oil imported from all sources amounted to 120,249,835 gallons valued at Rs. 765·21 lakhs, against 116,022,355 gallons, valued at Rs. 756·58 lakhs in the previous year. There was a considerable advance in the imports of kerosine from Burma and foreign countries. But owing to the reduction in the bonded stock by one million gallons, the average price was raised by 4 pies per gallon, or about 3·3 per cent. Foreign imports of lubricating and batching oil exceeded those of the previous year, imports from Burma decreasing proportionately. Imports of petrol from Burma increased from 6,674,766 gallons to 7,822, 241 gallons, but its price dropped from Rs. 1-6 to Rs. 1-0-6 per gallon during

the year. In spite of a decrease in price, the supply of fuel oil increased by 850,145 gallons over that of the last year.

Motor vehicles.

327. The total number of motor-cars, motor-cycles, and motor omnibuses (including vans and lorries) imported into Bengal amounted to 4,177; 741 and 1,555, respectively, as against 3,853; 583 and 1,443 in the preceding year. Of these 828 motor-cars were supplied by the United Kingdom, 1,797 by the United States, 922 by Canada, 477 by Italy, and 134 by France. In the heavier section, while the imports from the United Kingdom and Canada dropped to a certain extent, America increased her numbers from 518 to 950. In motor-cycles, however, the United Kingdom retained her supremacy supplying 709 out of a total of 741. Aided by a large decline in prices, imports of tyres and tubes improved considerably, the United Kingdom alone sending 33,822 tyres, and 46,109 tubes, out of a total of 81,851 and 89,553, respectively. France and the United States increased their supply, but Canada went down considerably.

Drugs, medicines and chemicals.

328. The imports in chemicals showed a marked increase under all the main heads of supply, and particularly under soda compound. Germany sent a large amount of camphor to the detriment of Japan and China. Government imports of Cinchona bark and quinine decreased from 237,459 lbs. to 69,531 lbs. due to increased outputs by the Government plantations and factories.

Glassware and earthenware.

329. The total imports in glassware and earthenware improved from Rs. 97·20 lakhs to Rs. 103·02 lakhs. The value of glass bangles increased from Rs. 24·42 lakhs to Rs. 25·48 lakhs, Japan, Czechoslovakia, and Germany being the principal suppliers. There was, however, considerable decline in the value of glass beads, owing to cheaper imports from Czechoslovakia. Imports of earthenware, and porcelain advanced from Rs. 13·40 lakhs to Rs. 16·46 lakhs, more than half of this increase going to the account of the Netherlands.

Machinery and Railway materials.

330. Imports of machinery and mill work had a slight set back, the total value of articles imported amounting to Rs. 4,11,04,702 as against Rs. 4,46,89,559 in the previous year. This falling off was attributed to the prolonged coal strike in the United Kingdom, whose share in the trade fell to Rs. 3,35,55,274 from Rs. 3,83,46,090 in the previous year. Imports of electrical machinery, however, improved considerably with a consequent advance in value from Rs. 44·95 lakhs to Rs. 56·17 lakhs. Improvements were also noticed as regards machinery for making paper, aerated waters, boots and shoes, coal mining, foundry, and rice and flour mill machinery, sewing machines and typewriters. Railway plant and rolling stock, both on private and Government account, fell off considerably, the combined figures amounting to Rs. 2,46,68,929 as

against Rs. 3,68,19,924 in 1925-26. Here again the bulk of the supply (Rs. 1,89,97,536) came from the United Kingdom in spite of her unfavourable position created by the strike.

Metals and metal manufactures.

331. Imports of metals and metal manufactures showed a slight decrease from 356,527 tons valued at Rs. 7,51·91 lakhs, to 340,428 tons valued at Rs. 7,34·35 lakhs. Considering that the coal strike had seriously handicapped her industries, it is noteworthy that the United Kingdom was able to maintain her position as the principal supplier, her total share in the imports under this head being approximately two-thirds of the total importations from abroad. Galvanized sheets continued to be imported in large quantities, while beams, pillars, etc., showed a marked decrease. The increasing output of the local industry in tinned plates was reflected in a still further decline in the imports under that head. The imports of metals other than iron and steel showed a slight decrease from 445,925 cwts., valued at Rs. 2,62·18 lakhs to 439,474 cwts. valued at Rs. 2,52·46 lakhs. Imports of brass, copper and lead in general, decreased, while those of aluminium and zinc or spelter increased.

Paper and paste-board.

332. The total imports of paper and pasteboards increased from 437,459 cwts. valued at Rs. 80·80 lakhs, to Rs. 518,946 cwts. valued at Rs. 90·62 lakhs. Imports of printing paper, which showed some decline last year, presumably as a result of protection, increased considerably, and its price was somewhat less than in the previous year. Imports of writing papers showed a further decrease, though a tendency to import higher priced paper, as an indirect effect of protection, was again noticeable. Imports of packing paper and old newspapers as well as paper-making materials and chemicals were considerably larger.

Cotton manufactures.

333. During the year under review there was a decided improvement in the imports of cotton goods in general, except that of twist and yarn, which fell to the extent of 29 per cent. in quantity and 37 per cent. in value. At the beginning of the year the prospects of trade were very gloomy. The communal riots had just then begun, and continued intermittently well into the year. The result was that the whole trade was thoroughly disorganised and business was practically at a standstill. This slump in the business was further aggravated by the anticipated fall in the price of raw cotton owing to a bumper American crop, and the coal strike in the United Kingdom, which interfered with the execution of old orders and caused anxiety in the booking of fresh ones. By the end of the year, however, the situation began to ease up with the falling off in the prices of Lancashire goods, and large orders for foreign manufactures were booked. The United Kingdom was, as usual, the biggest supplier. Japan, however,

nearly doubled her shipments of grey goods, and is winning a definite footing in the *dhooti* trade with a quality intermediate between the coarse Bombay and fine Lancashire goods. In white goods her share somewhat decreased, but in the hosiery trade she retained her supremacy by sending goods worth about Rs. 75 lakhs out of a total of Rs. 86 lakhs.

Silk and artificial silk piece-goods.

334. The main feature of this trade was the large expansion of artificial silk piece-goods. Improved methods of producing artificial silk yarn led to a marked reduction in the price of the manufactured article, and as a result business flourished. In 1925-26 the United Kingdom headed the list with 1·6 million yards, but during the year under report, although her imports advanced to over 4 million yards, Italy passed her with just over 5 million.

Imports of pure silk piece-goods fell considerably, while mixtures advanced by 50 per cent. Japan supplied 231,946 yards out of a total of 319,833 of the former, while Italy was the biggest supplier of the latter with 27 per cent. of the trade. China, including Hongkong, lost considerably under both these heads.

Woollen goods.

335. With the continued decline in prices imports of woollen goods had a further advance from Rs. 69·78 lakhs to Rs. 74·07 lakhs, Italy and Germany contributing mostly to the increased trade. The United Kingdom's share, though it receded slightly from Rs. 37 to Rs. 36 lakhs, represented nearly half of the total trade. Germany increased her supplies in blankets and shawls.

Other goods.

336. Of other articles, instruments, apparatus and appliances recorded valuable advances, the total value increasing from Rs. 1,46 lakhs to Rs. 1,70 lakhs, electrical instruments, which formed the bulk of this trade, alone advancing from Rs. 1,00 lakhs to Rs. 1,15 lakhs, chiefly from the United Kingdom. Imports of hardware fell from Rs. 1,82 lakhs to Rs. 1,70 lakhs. The share of the United Kingdom, the United States and Japan in this trade decreased, while that of Germany increased. Imports of betel-nuts, chiefly from the Straits Settlements, increased from Rs. 135 lakhs to Rs. 1,49 lakhs. Cigarettes, jewellery, precious stones, gold and silver thread, and cinematograph films imported through the post, declined from Rs. 15·80 lakhs to Rs. 7·97 lakhs, due chiefly to smaller receipts of precious stones. Imports of grain, pulse, and flour increased considerably, due chiefly to a smaller Indian crop necessitating larger purchases of wheat from Australia. Imports of paints and painters' materials increased from Rs. 46 lakhs to Rs. 54 lakhs, the chief suppliers being the United Kingdom with Rs. 33 lakhs. Imports of tea chests decreased from Rs. 62 lakhs to Rs. 43 lakhs, mainly due to overstocking in the two previous years. The falling off in the imports of cement was responsible for the lower receipts under building and engineering

materials. Imports of apparel further advanced from Rs. 28 lakhs to Rs. 32 lakhs, the demand for secondhand clothing from the United Kingdom remaining steady throughout the year. Imports of foreign-made matches had a further drop from Rs. 26 lakhs to Rs. 22 lakhs, due solely to the expansion of the local match-making industry. Fluctuations in other articles worth mentioning were the increased purchases of horses from Australia, boots and shoes from the United States, cutlery, asbestos, toilet requisites and earthenware and porcelain.

337. The total value of imports from foreign countries into Chittagong attained the gratifying total of Rs. 1,65 lakhs against Rs. 1,00 lakhs of the previous year. All the principal articles except tea chests contributed to the increase. The United Kingdom had 83 per cent. of this trade. Import trade of Chittagong.

## Export of Merchandise.

338. Export of Indian merchandise from the port of Calcutta decreased from Rs. 1,45,45,49,487 to Rs. 1,26,33,53,896. The comparative importance of the principal articles exported from Calcutta is shown in the following table:—

| | 1925-26. | 1926-27. | Percentage of proportion to total merchandise exported. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. | Rs. | |
| Jute manufactures | 58,74,43,517 | 53,06,70,413 | 42·00 |
| Jute, raw | 35,99,44,088 | 25,58,49,537 | 20·25 |
| Tea | 17,70,59,924 | 18,75,97,390 | 14·86 |
| Lac | 6,87,59,289 | 5,42,94,570 | 4·30 |
| Hides and skins, raw | 4,85,04,368 | 4,83,99,050 | 3·83 |
| Grain, pulse and flour | 3,83,69,914 | 3,23,01,263 | 2·56 |
| Metals and ores | 2,75,17,899 | 2,62,18,475 | 2·08 |
| Seeds | 4,32,50,300 | 2,61,35,138 | 2·07 |
| Opium | 1,93,36,715 | 2,11,84,000 | 1·68 |
| Mica | 91,08,376 | 93,57,403 | ·74 |
| Coal, coke and patent fuel | 34,72,371 | 80,70,293 | ·64 |
| Cotton, raw | 85,23,486 | 64,01,257 | ·51 |
| Hemp, raw | 1,04,45,450 | 59,36,339 | ·47 |
| Manures | 54,87,550 | 58,89,186 | ·47 |
| Oil-cakes | 59,64,713 | 52,67,842 | ·42 |
| Dyeing and tanning substances | 47,42,054 | 48,56,384 | ·38 |
| Postal articles | 51,48,348 | 47,59,542 | ·37 |
| Woollen manufactures | 35,76,773 | 33,27,438 | 26 |
| Provisions and oilman's stores | 26,85,065 | 28,53,173 | ·23 |
| Spices | 36,73,809 | 27,58,907 | ·22 |
| Paraffin wax | 3,75,744 | 26,41,612 | ·21 |
| Kapok | 15,77,373 | 19,51,116 | ·15 |
| Drugs and medicines | 16,05,331 | 18,17,362 | ·14 |
| Apparel (excluding hosiery, boots and shoes) | 19,05,373 | 17,28,850 | ·14 |
| Cordage and rope | 10,77,604 | 13,17,241 | ·10 |
| Instruments | 10,07,113 | 12,79,792 | ·10 |
| Oils | 21,63,917 | 11,82,623 | ·09 |
| Saltpetre | 18,26,781 | 11,28,189 | ·09 |
| Fruits and vegetables | 7,11,503 | 8,19,294 | ·06 |
| Animals, living | 6,85,802 | 7,67,682 | ·06 |
| Bristles | 7,96,459 | 6,73,691 | ·05 |
| Tobacco | 11,52,007 | 5,00,529 | ·04 |
| Other articles | 61,49,501 | 54,18,305 | ·43 |
| Total Indian Merchandise | 1,45,45,49,487 | 1,26,33,53,896 | 100·00 |

Grain, pulse and flour.

339. Bengal suffered a further set-back in her foreign rice trade. The total quantity shipped from Calcutta declined from 143,462 tons valued at Rs. 3,01 lakhs, to 109,189 tons valued at Rs. 2,37 lakhs. This was mainly due to the rise in the price of Bengal rice resulting in the reduced demands from the importing countries, which sought cheaper markets. The failure of the all-India wheat crop for 1925-26, and the bumper crop in other wheat producing countries resulted in Calcutta's share in this trade dwindling to a negligible quantity. During the year under review her sole business consisted practically in exporting 781 tons to Hongkong, as compared with a total export of 6,518 tons during the preceding year. Exports of wheat flour, however, improved a little. There was a similar collapse in exports of barley. Calcutta shipments amounted to 256 tons against 6,648 in the previous year, the decrease being due to the entire absence of orders from Germany and Belgium, coupled with lesser demands from the United Kingdom. Exports of pulse advanced from 35,921 tons to 47,186 tons. Out of this, shipments to the United Kingdom increased from 8,896 to 11,381 tons, and in value from Rs. 11·78 lakhs to Rs. 16·78 lakhs.

Tea.

340. The total exports of tea increased from 207 million lbs. valued at Rs. 17,70·60 lakhs in the year 1925-26 to 228 million lbs. valued at Rs. 18,75·97 lakhs in the year under report. The season was on the whole satisfactory, but for the heavy falling off in prices during the second half of the year due to the production being much in excess of the demand. Except for a slight set-back in July, the plantations were favoured with ideal weather throughout the season, and at the end of October the crop was 26½ millions in excess of the production of the last year. Furthermore, tempted by the high prices ruling throughout the first half of the year, many producers were guilty of careless plucking, and in consequence the quality of tea deteriorated considerably. The home buyers very naturally lost all interest in Indian tea, and the sales in London suffered in consequence. The result was that there was a considerable accumulation of stocks, and prices collapsed. But in spite of this, shipments from Calcutta to the United Kingdom continued to go forward, and the total exports advanced from 169 million lbs. to 177 million lbs. There was, however, a heavy falling off in the shipments to Russia and China, but this was well covered by the increases in the shipments to Canada, Australasia, Africa, the United States, Persia and Mesopotamia. Exports of tea waste had a further decline from 2·76 million to 1·41 million lbs., the United States and the United Kingdom both taking less.

Coal.

341. The coal trade of Bengal was considerably stimulated by the miners' strike in England, her total export advancing from

240,224 tons valued at Rs. 34·58 lakhs to 640,527 tons, valued at Rs. 80·34 lakhs during the year under report. The increase was due to the extraordinary shipments of 105,711 tons to Egypt and 48,868 tons to the United Kingdom. For the first time in the annals of the Bengal trade, coal was sent to the United Kingdom.

342. Exports of lac (both manufactured and raw) increased from 536,032 cwts. to 585,548 cwts., but the value fell considerably from Rs. 6,87·59 lakhs to Rs. 5,42·95 lakhs, due chiefly to a general decline in prices. The noteworthy feature of this year's trade was the increased export of raw material, which advanced from 97,769 cwts. to 140,029 cwts., the United States, Germany and the Netherlands being the chief customers. Lac.

343. The total exports of hides and skins were maintained in quantity, but the value decreased from Rs. 4,91·59 lakhs to Rs. 4,87·37 lakhs, or by about 22 per cent. due to lower prices. A striking feature of the trade was the heavy falling off in the shipments of raw hides and skins to the United Kingdom, where, owing to the coal stoppage the leather trade passed through a most trying and unsatisfactory year, and suffered severely from German competition. The loss in the quantity shipped to the United Kingdom was, however, balanced to some extent by increased purchases of raw hides by Germany and Spain, the former taking approximately half of the supply. Hides and Skins.

Raw skins continued to be in better demand, the United Kingdom alone being unable to increase her purchases for reasons stated above. The bulk of the shipments consisted of goat skins, the number increasing from 13·13 million to 13·44 million pieces, and the value from Rs. 2,19 lakhs to Rs. 2,55 lakhs, the biggest purchaser being the United States. A noticeable feature of the trade was the increased demand for lizard skins, the number of which increased from 232,672 pieces, valued at Rs. 3·32 lakhs, to the striking total of 13,55,342 pieces, valued at Rs. 22·22 lakhs, of which France contributed Rs. 14·50 lakhs.

344. In spite of smaller purchases by the United Kingdom, the exports of manganese ore rose from 269,584 tons to 301,418 tons, and though the value advanced from Rs. 81·73 lakhs to Rs. 86·52 lakhs, it was not commensurate with the percentage of increase in the quantity. The biggest purchasers were the United States and Japan, and the Netherlands came next. Shipments of ferro-manganese improved further from 1,583 to 2,727 tons, of which 1,733 tons went to Belgium. Exports of pig iron dropped from Metals and ores.

380,762 tons to 309,405 tons, and the value from Rs. 174·68 lakhs to Rs. 139·55 lakhs. While Japan increased her purchases from 168,188 to 234,529 tons, all other customers reduced their demands. There was a further advance in the value of other metal and ores, which rose from Rs. 17·99 lakhs to Rs. 32·87 lakhs. Besides manganese ore, 4,008 tons of phosphoric ore were shipped to Belgium, 639 tons of bauxite to Japan, and 244 tons of chromite to France, Japan and Belgium.

**Mica.**

345. Though the total exports of mica fell from 86,532 cwts. to 73,063 cwts., the value advanced from Rs. 91·08 lakhs to Rs. 93·57 lakhs, due to a general advance in prices. Splittings continued to form the bulk of the trade, better prices raising the value from Rs. 67·05 lakhs to Rs. 68·45 lakhs, in spite of a falling off in quantity from 72,236 to 62,513 cwts. The principal customers were the United States of America, the United Kingdom coming next.

**Oilseeds and vegetable oils.**

346. The total quantity of oil seeds of all kinds exported during the year amounted to 125,128 tons, valued at Rs. 2,53·94 lakhs, as against 168,752 tons valued at Rs. 4,27·34 lakhs in the year previous. The decline was due mainly to the linseed crop being damaged by untimely rain and hail, and to the smaller demand from the United Kingdom, Calcutta's best customer, on account of the strikes. Shipments of rape seeds had also a considerable set-back, due to the reduction of demand from France, which was formerly Bengal's chief customer. Exports of other seeds also fell off very considerably due chiefly to the reduced shipments of poppy, mustard and til seeds. Exports of vegetable oils of all descriptions decreased from 768,829 gallons to 454,423 gallons, due to the demand being generally poor. Shipments of rape and sesamum cakes fell again from 46,730 to 35,990 tons, Japan, the principal consumer, reducing her orders. Linseed cakes, however, continued to be in request, the exports improving from 9,073 to 13,114 tons, most of which, as usual, went to the United Kingdom.

**Cotton and cotton manufactures.**

347. Although there was a general decline in the cotton trade of India, due to the enormous fall in the prices of American cotton, Calcutta, in spite of her poor participation in this trade, managed to maintain her shipments at a very slightly higher level, the figures being 7,080 tons against 7,032 tons of the previous year. Shipments of twists and yarns collapsed in the absence of orders from China.

348. In spite of heavy cuts in the prices, the total exports from Calcutta further declined from 417,477 cwts. to 319,043 cwts., and the value from Rs. 104·45 lakhs to Rs. 59·36 lakhs. The hemp produced in Manila, Italy and Russia, being plentiful and cheap, was very much in demand, and consequently the demand for the Indian product was less. Hemp.

349. During the year under review there was a record shipment of jute and jute goods, the total tonnage exceeding that of the previous year by nearly 8 per cent. In spite of this increase in quantity, the total value realised was less than that of the previous year by 17 per cent. owing to a general falling off in the prices. At the beginning of the year prices were ruling high, but as the supplies of the much under-estimated 1925 crop were still then arriving, prices began to come down rapidly, and the prospects of a bumper crop, as revealed by the preliminary forecast in July, had the effect of bringing down the prices to such a low level that even the publication of the final forecast, disclosing a much less yield had but little effect on them. Furthermore the imports of jute into Calcutta from the cultivating centres were considerably less at the beginning due to the new crop being abnormally slow in coming forward, as the cultivators were holding back supplies, and also to transport difficulties. But from September the arrivals were heavier, and this had the effect of further unsteadying prices. The result was that both spinners and manufacturers suffered considerable losses, and it was only towards the last quarter of the year that the situation became easier. The total profits of the jute mills reached Rs. 2·73 crores, which was Rs. 3·62 crores less than those of the previous year. Jute and jute manufactures.

Taking advantage of the low prices Germany regained her leading position among Calcutta's customers, and the total value of her purchases came up to Rs. 7,34·06 lakhs. Due to industrial difficulties at home the United Kingdom had to remain content by taking supplies valued at Rs. 5,39·44 lakhs, and thus had to yield her leading position to Germany. France and the United States continued to require larger quantities, and while orders from Belgium and Spain showed satisfactory revival, those of Italy, Brazil and Japan fell off considerably. Of the minor countries, increased shipments to Egypt, the Argentine and China were discounted by smaller shipments to the Netherlands, Greece and Mexico.

Although shipments of gunny bags increased from 424 millions to 447 millions, the value decreased from Rs. 26,66·40 lakhs to Rs. 24,31·37 lakhs, due solely to the prices coming down in sympathy with the value of raw materials. Taking advantage of the

low prices, Australasia increased her purchases still further, and retained her leading position among the customers of Calcutta. Next to Australasia came Cuba, the United Kingdom, Java, Chile and Peru, but their purchases were considerably less than those of the previous year. Japan, however, was able to increase her purchases in spite of a movement inaugurated in the United States to encourage the use of cotton bags instead of jute bags for cotton seeds and fertilisers. Shipments of gunny bags to that country also increased.

The trade in gunny cloth was well maintained, and though the United States continued to absorb the bulk of the output, their requirements were smaller than in the previous year. The increase in the total yardage from 1,460 millions to 1,501 millions was due to the Argentine increasing her purchases from 220 million to 318 million yards. There were also larger purchases by Uruguay, but those of the United Kingdom and Canada declined.

**Saltpetre.**

350. There was a further decrease in the export of saltpetre from 125,514 cwts. valued at Rs. 18·27 lakhs to 95,122 cwts. valued at Rs. 11·28 lakhs. Though Ceylon retained her leading position among Calcutta's customers, her demands were reduced from 75,012 cwts. to 66,551 cwts. The port really responsible for the total decrease was, however, Hongkong, whose purchases were reduced from 25,705 cwts. to 2,588 cwts. only.

**Opium.**

351. Government sales of opium by public auction were discontinued during the year, and no shipments were allowed to go forward unless covered by an import certificate issued by the Government of the importing country.

In spite of this, shipments on Government account increased from 2,699 chests to 3,199 chests, of which 2,370 chests went to the Straits Settlements, 483 chests (medicinal opium) to the United Kingdom, 180 chests to Hongkong, 136 chests to British Borneo, and 30 to Ceylon. Exports on private account also showed increases from 4,608 chests to 5,296 chests of which 2,360 chests were sent to Indo-China, 1,500 chests to Java, 1,400 chests to Siam and 36 to other countries.

**Dyeing and tanning substances including indigo.**

352. There was at last some improvement in this trade, the total quantity increasing from 23,154 to 28,125 tons, and the value from Rs. 47·42 lakhs to Rs. 48·56 lakhs. Exports of myrobalans

advanced in quantity from 22,137 tons to 27,240 tons, and in value from Rs. 38·51 lakhs to Rs. 42·21 lakhs. The United Kingdom increased her supplies from 5,868 tons to 6,336 tons, and her example was followed by Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and France. The United States continued to be the principal customer, but she reduced her purchases from 7,943 tons to 7,483 tons. There was a better demand too for myrobalan extract, the shipments advancing from 1,528 to 1,908 tons, and the value from Rs. 3,89 lakhs to Rs. 4,83 lakhs. The exports of indigo showed a slight increase from 942 cwts. to 952 cwts., but fetched a total value of Rs. 2,85 lakhs only or about Rs. 28 lakhs less than that of the last year. There was a set-back in the shipments of cutch and gambier, safflower and turmeric, the total transactions dropping from Rs. 5·64 lakhs to Rs. 3·23 lakhs.

Other articles.

353. There was a considerable improvement in the shipments of manures, the total value advancing from Rs. 55 lakhs to Rs. 85 lakhs. The chief reason for this was increased shipments of bones, the value of which increased from Rs. 38 lakhs to 42 lakhs. Shipments of sulphate of ammonia and animal meal were slightly smaller, and so also was the case with carpets and rugs, which was due to the smaller purchases by the United Kingdom. Exports of spices decreased from Rs. 37 lakhs to Rs. 28 lakhs, Ceylon reducing her orders for chillies, and the Straits Settlements for pepper. Exports of kapok improved from Rs. 16 lakhs to Rs. 20 lakhs, Australia increasing her purchases from Rs. 2 lakhs to Rs. 6 lakhs. There was another big improvement in the shipments of paraffin wax, the value of which advanced from Rs. 9 lakhs to Rs. 26 lakhs, the bulk going to the United Kingdom. Interest in Indian tobacco leaf was on the wane; Japan, Germany and the Netherlands all reduced their indents, and the total value of exports dropped in consequence from Rs. 12 lakhs to Rs. 5 lakhs. Exports of provisions, aided by larger orders for *ghi* from the Straits Settlements, increased from Rs. 27 lakhs to Rs. 29 lakhs. There was a continued decline in the shipments of raw silk, the value dropping from Rs. 6 lakhs to Rs. 2 lakhs. Re-exports of raw wool advanced from Rs. 16 lakhs to Rs. 20 lakhs, the United States requiring more and the United Kingdom less.

Foreign exports from Chittagong.

354. Exports from Chittagong to foreign countries improved from Rs. 7,32 lakhs to Rs. 7,75 lakhs. This was due to increased shipments of tea, which advanced from 72 million lbs. to 76 million lbs. in quantity, and from Rs. 5,59 lakhs to Rs. 6,49 lakhs in value. The total export trade was shared chiefly by the United Kingdom (93 per cent.) the United States (5 per cent.) and Germany (1 per cent.).

Distribution of export and import trade of Calcutta.

355. The following table shows the distribution of the import and export trade of Calcutta:—

| | Imports. | | | | Exports. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1925-26. | | 1926-27. | | 1925-26. | | 1926-27. | Percentage to total exports. |
| | Value. Rs. (lakhs). | Percentage to tot l imports. | Value. Rs (lakhs.) | Percentage to total imports. | Value. Rs. (lakhs). | Percentage to total exports. | Value. Rs. (lakhs.) | |
| United Kingdom .. .. | 47,43·90 | 59·98 | 44,76·63 | 55·87 | 34,03·03 | 23·30 | 27,47·48 | 21·65 |
| British possessions .. .. | 4,78·98 | 6·06 | 4,67·51 | 5·84 | 19,67·72 | 13·48 | 20,29·83 | 16· |
| Germany .. .. | 3,51·02 | 4·44 | 4,27·73 | 5·34 | 10,93·43 | 7·49 | 9,81·40 | 7·73 |
| France .. .. | 72·98 | 0·92 | 77·44 | 0·97 | 7,12·36 | 4·88 | 5,22·65 | 4·12 |
| Belgium .. .. | 1,51·27 | 1·91 | 1,49·14 | 1·86 | 3,59·27 | 2·46 | 3,15·91 | 2·48 |
| Italy .. .. .. | 96·37 | 1·22 | 1,42·61 | 1·78 | 3,82·26 | 2·62 | 2,38·25 | 1·87 |
| Java .. .. .. | 6,62·61 | 8·38 | 7,35·96 | 9·18 | 3,03·15 | 2·08 | 2,48·17 | 1·96 |
| Japan .. .. .. | 4,85·29 | 6·14 | 4,98·58 | 6·22 | 3,68·53 | 2·52 | 3,81·39 | 3·01 |
| United States .. .. | 4,90·71 | 6·20 | 5,78·21 | 7·21 | 33,48·66 | 22·93 | 28,67·70 | 22·60 |
| South America .. .. | .... | .... | ·01 | .... | 9,52·45 | 6·52 | 9,29·70 | 7·32 |
| Other countries .. .. | 3,75·71 | 4·75 | 4,58·43 | 5·73 | 17,11·51 | 11·72 | 14,27·15 | 11·26 |
| Total .. | 79,08·84 | 100·00 | 80,12·25 | 100·00 | 146,02·39 | 100·00 | 126,89·63 | 100·00 |

The total trade of the United Kingdom with Calcutta amounted to Rs. 72,23·11 lakhs against Rs. 81,46·93 lakhs in the previous year. This was due to a general falling off in the value of both exports and imports. On the import side the total value decreased from Rs. 47,44 lakhs to Rs. 44,77 lakhs, which in view of the miners' strike is not surprising. This fall might also be attributed to a certain extent to the drop in the prices of certain articles especially that of cotton piece-goods, which declined by Rs. 61 lakhs, in spite of the advance in the yardage by 82 millions. There were also marked decreases in the value of railway materials by Rs. 109 lakhs, machinery by Rs. 48 lakhs, and metals and ores by Rs. 46 lakhs. Imports of tea chests also fell by Rs. 15 lakhs, those of building materials (chiefly cement) by Rs. 7 lakhs, salt by Rs. 7 lakhs, and hardware and cutlery by Rs. 5 lakhs. These heavy decreases were partly counterbalanced by increases in the value of instruments and apparatus by Rs. 19 lakhs, motor-cars by Rs. 12 lakhs, provisions by Rs. 11 lakhs, and tobacco and chemicals by Rs. 9 lakhs each. On the export side too the trade decreased from Rs. 34,03 to Rs. 27,47 lakhs, the lower prices being again chiefly responsible for the decline.

In spite of increased quantities of tea and lac exported to the United Kingdom during the year, the value fell off to the extent of Rs. 3 lakhs, and Rs. 29 lakhs respectively. There was a drop also in the total values of raw jute, jute manufactures and linseed, smaller shipments and lower prices being responsible for the decrease. Exports of hides and skins, rice, hemp, manganese ore, raw wool and wool manufactures were all smaller, and no wheat was shipped, against Rs. 8 lakhs worth in the previous year. For the first time in the history of the trade of Calcutta, coal valued at Rs. 5 lakhs was exported to the United Kingdom. A happy sign was noticed in the revival of the trade in paraffin wax, and quantity valued at Rs. 22 lakhs was sent out against nil in 1925-26.

Other articles to show increased shipments were pulse, lentils, oilcakes, mica and indigo.

The share of the United Kingdom in the grand total of Calcutta trade sustained a further fall from 36·19 per cent. to 34·90 per cent.

With the exception of Australia, the Straits Settlements and Hongkong imports from all British Possessions and Dependencies fell off considerably. The Straits Settlements sent increased quantities of betelnuts, which advanced the total receipts under spices from Rs. 1,37 lakhs to Rs. 1,60 lakhs. Increased purchases of wheat and horses raised the value of imports from Australia, while Hongkong sent more articles through the post. Despatches of motor-cars and motor-tyres from Canada were considerably less

than in the previous year. Ceylon exported much less cocoanut oil, while Mauritius sent no sugar at all against Rs. 4 lakhs in 1925-1926. Of other British Possessions Aden sent a little more salt, but British Borneo sent no mineral oil as compared with Rs. 45 lakhs of last year.

On the export side, improvements in the shipments to Australia were well maintained. There were increased despatches of gunnies and tea to that country which more than covered the loss in smaller sales of linseed. The Straits Settlements and Ceylon took more coal, but much less gunny bags and rice, while Canada took more tea but less gunny cloth. Mauritius reduced her orders for rice, and the Union of South Africa hers for jute manufactures. There was a revival in shipments of coal to Aden, of tea to Mesopotamia, and tea and gunny bags to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

There was a record advance in the imports from Germany from Rs. 3,51 lakhs to Rs. 4,28 lakhs. Taking advantage of the miners' strike in the United Kingdom she was able to expand her trade in metal from Rs. 65 lakhs to Rs. 84 lakhs. And though she lost ground in her business in white oil, she more than covered the loss by the increase in her sales of sugar, cotton and woollen goods, hardware and cutlery, paper, salt, glassware, machinery, railway materials, aniline dyes, and drugs and medicines. Exports to Germany declined again in value from Rs. 10,93 lakhs to Rs. 9,81 lakhs, due chiefly to the very low prices ruling for raw jute, as, though the quantity taken increased from 140,707 tons to 181,518 tons, the value depreciated from Rs. 7,93 lakhs to Rs. 7,34 lakhs. Her purchases of raw hides and skins were further reduced from Rs. 118 lakhs to Rs. 107 lakhs, and while she increased her indents for lac, the price paid was reduced from Rs. 63 lakhs to Rs. 51 lakhs. Her orders for oilseeds, myrobalans and jute manufactures were slightly larger, but those for raw cotton, rice, mica, and raw hemp declined. Imports from France improved slightly, small losses under iron and steel, tyres and tubes, and champagne being covered by small gains under brandy, motor-cars and cycles, woollen and silk manufactures, and apparel. Exports to France dropped heavily from Rs. 7,12 lakhs to Rs. 5,23 lakhs, increases under linseed and raw skins being heavily discounted by the loss in shipments of raw jute from Rs. 5,25 lakhs to Rs. 3,45 lakhs. Imports from Belgium were well maintained at Rs. 1,49 lakhs losses in iron and steel, spelter, precious stones, and machinery being balanced by improved sales of cotton goods, glass and glassware, and aniline dyes. Exports to Belgium declined from Rs. 3,59 lakhs to Rs. 3,16 lakhs, linseed, hemp and raw cotton fell away, and the value of raw jute declined inspite of larger shipments. Imports from Italy recorded a marked advance from

Rs. 96 lakhs to Rs. 1,43 lakhs. Her sales of piece-goods, and artificial silk showed great improvement, and better business was done in coloured cotton and woollen goods, motor-cars and sulphur. Exports to Italy fell from Rs. 3,82 lakhs to Rs. 2,38 lakhs, raw jute alone accounting for a loss of Rs. 1,20 lakhs. There was an increase in the value of imports from other European countries, notably of provisions and cotton goods from the Netherlands and salt from Spain. But the value of exports considerably dropped due chiefly to the reduced purchases of raw jute by the Netherlands, Spain and Greece, raw hides by Sweden and Norway, and of jute manufactures by European Turkey.

Helped by better prices for sugar Java increased her export trade, but her purchases of gunny bags were smaller. Japan increased her sales of cotton goods, logs for match-making, paints and painter's materials and brass, and maintained her valuable trade in glass and glassware, though she lost some business in matches and hardware, umbrella fittings and toys. She reduced her orders for raw jute, oilcakes, manures and lac, but more than made up for this by much larger purchases of jute goods and pig-iron. China supplied more cotton twist and yarn, cassia lignea and tea, but took less raw jute and tea. Trade with Arabia and Turkey in Asia showed little expansion, but there was considerable increase in the import of mineral oil from Dutch Borneo. A notable advance was made in the export of tea to Persia and jute manufactures to Siam, Sumatra and Borneo.

Egypt sent more salt and took for the first time coal from Calcutta, but the fall in her total value of purchases was entirely due to the drop in the prices of raw jute and jute manufactures, though the quantities taken were larger.

Imports from the United States advanced from Rs. 4,91 lakhs to Rs. 5,78 lakhs. Her business in lubricating oils was well maintained, and in kerosene was pushed from Rs. 1,21 lakhs to Rs. 1,53 lakhs, while noteworthy increases were made in sales of tinned and galvanized sheets and plates, machinery and motor-cars and motor-cycles, tobacco, tyres and tubes, provisions, boots and shoes and instruments (chiefly electrical). Exports to the United States fell from Rs. 33,49 lakhs to Rs. 28,68 lakhs. Orders for hessian cloth were on a smaller scale and though more raw jute and lac were taken, the prices paid were less. Shipments of goat skins and tea improved and interest in manganese ore revived, but the demand for pig iron, raw cotton and raw hemp fell off.

Exports to South America declined from Rs. 9,52 lakhs to Rs. 9,30 lakhs. Shipments of gunny cloth to the Argentine

slightly increased while those of raw jute to Brazil and gunny bags to Chile, Cuba and Porto Rico decreased.

## Coasting Trade.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal for 1926-27.]

356. The total trade of Calcutta with other ports advanced from Rs. 30,02 crores to Rs. 31,04 crores, both sides of the account showing improvements.

**Imports.**

357. The import trade of Calcutta increased from Rs. 15,42·97 lakhs to Rs. 16,15·03 lakhs. The biggest share of this trade was absorbed by Burma. She maintained her sales of rice at Rs. 95 lakhs, and increased her despatches of mineral oil from Rs. 3,92 lakhs to Rs. 4,26 lakhs, and of stick lac from Rs. 37 lakhs to Rs. 65 lakhs. Imports from Bombay made no recovery; her trade in Indian cotton manufactures, chiefly grey piece-goods, declining further from Rs. 2,02 lakhs to Rs. 1,95 lakhs, and in cotton twist and yarn from Rs. 36 lakhs to Rs. 33 lakhs. The decrease in the import of raw cotton from Rs. 80 lakhs to Rs. 53 lakhs was due to the decline in the receipts from Bombay from Rs. 19 lakhs to Rs. 7 lakhs, and from Madras from Rs. 55 lakhs to Rs. 34 lakhs. Madras, however, increased her sales of cotton twist and yarn from Rs. 61 lakhs to Rs. 82 lakhs, of cocoanut oil from Rs. 32 lakhs to Rs. 60 lakhs, and earthnut seeds from Rs. 4 lakhs to Rs. 12 lakhs. Trade with Bihar and Orissa fell from Rs. 34 lakhs to Rs. 26 lakhs, but Sind improved her sales a little.

**Exports.**

358. The export trade of Calcutta advanced from Rs. 30,01·80 lakhs to Rs. 31,04·46 lakhs. Shipments of jute manufactures which as usual formed the bulk of this trade, declined from Rs. 508 lakhs to Rs. 468 lakhs, due solely to lower prices, though the tonnage advanced from 78,548 tons to 86,774 tons. Bombay increased her demand for both bags and cloth, but there was a heavy reduction in the purchases of gunny bags by Burma.

Exports of coal advanced from 1,139,577 tons valued at Rs. 1,72 lakhs to 1,443,043 tons valued at Rs. 1,93 lakhs, Burma, Madras, Bombay and Sind all taking increased quantities. Shipments of grain and pulse were well maintained, but those of rice and gram declined. Exports of twist and yarn increased from Rs. 45 lakhs to Rs. 58 lakhs, tea from Rs. 29 lakhs to Rs. 49 lakhs, and tobacco manufactures from Rs. 30 lakhs to Rs. 39 lakhs, most of these being taken by Burma. Exports of hides and skins assisted by larger orders from Madras, improved from Rs. 12 lakhs to Rs. 19 lakhs, but that of betelnuts dropped from Rs. 77 lakhs to Rs. 69 lakhs. Re-exports of tea declined from Rs. 18 lakhs to Rs. 8 lakhs, which was due to both Madras and Burma reducing their orders.

## PUBLIC WORKS.

### Buildings and Roads.

Revenue and expenditure.

359. The revenue realised during the year amounted to Rs. 6·70 lakhs of which Rs. 5·67 lakhs were Provincial.

The expenditure totalled Rs. 1,39·64 lakhs including about Rs. 20·70 lakhs for Establishment and Tools and Plant. Of this total, Rs. 9·13 lakhs were for Central Works, Rs. 16·59 lakhs for Provincial Works (reserved) Rs. 49·88 lakhs for Provincial Works (reserved A) and Rs. 26·51 lakhs for Provincial Works (Transferred). Rs. 8·45 lakhs were expended on contribution works, Rs. 2·52 lakhs on grants in aid, and Rs. 5·85 lakhs on 60 Civil Works not charged to Revenue.

Central buildings.

360. The construction of quarters for the telephone Exchange staff at Asansol was in progress. The new Income Tax Office and officers' quarters at Jalpaiguri and at Rangpur were almost completed, while the construction of 4 kutcha salt golas at Chittagong was fully completed.

Provincial buildings.

361. Rupees 22·25 lakhs were expended under "Transferred" head, Rs. 6·20 lakhs under the "Reserved" head and Rs. 47·32 lakhs under Reserved A.

Education buildings accounted for Rs. 10·57 lakhs, buildings in connection with General Administration Rs. 11·72 lakhs and buildings relating to Administration of Justice, Police, Medical, Jails and other civil works Rs. 53·48 lakhs.

Of the several buildings completed, the more important were the temporary buildings in the compound of the Judges Court at Alipore for the accommodation of six Judges; section houses for the Police Department at Kalighat, Moochipara, Jorasanko, and Park Street, Calcutta; Islamia College, Calcutta; Guru Training Schools at Amtola (Howrah), Berhampore, Midnapore and Krishnagore; Laboratory assistants' quarters at the Bengal Engineering College, Sibpur; Munsifi buildings at Serampore, Munshiganj, Mymensingh, Gopalganj, Chikundi, Rajbari and Bhola; Public Works Department Subdivisional Officer's office and quarters at Asansol and Kalimpong and quarters for the Subdivisional Officer at Siliguri and Rajshahi; new Subdivisional Court building at Siliguri; protective works to protect the compound of Thorn Cottage, Darjeeling; residences for the Munsifs at Raiganj and Chikandi; Muhammadan hostels for the Rajshahi and Chittagong Colleges; barrack in the police lines at Jalpaiguri for 30 married constables; Agricultural Farm buildings at Mainaguri, Malda, Dinajpur and Rangamati; new Dormitory building at the Dow Hill Girls' School at Kurseong; residences for the 2nd and

3rd officers at Netrakona; quarters for the 2nd officer at Patuakhali; Veterinary hospital at Dacca; office of the Director of Agriculture and officers subordinate to him at the Dacca Farm.

The following works were in course of construction: Section buildings for the Police Department at Taltola and Burtola, Calcutta; Police Vehicle Department buildings, Calcutta; Principal's quarters at the Bengal Veterinary College, Belgachia; Deputy Magistrate's quarters at Mansadwip; hostel for the Medical School at Burdwan; Sub-Registry office at Kushtia; Hindu hostel for the Krishnagar College; residence for the Mining Instructor at Asansol; Subdivisional Court building at Saidpur and Gopalganj; combined court buildings for the Sessions Judge and the Sub-Judge at Malda; Subdivisional Officer's residence at Madaripur; Sub-Deputy Collector's residence at Bongaon; Munsifi buildings at Tangail, Chandpur and Patya; new Police lines at Barisal; Police buildings at Nakhyongchhari; collegiate school at Chittagong; dispensary building with quarters for the Sub-Assistant Surgeon at Langadu; and protective works against the erosion of the site for the Subdivisional head-quarters at Gopalganj. The extension of the Eden Hindu Hospital, Medical College, Calcutta, was started during the year and is progressing favourably. The sites and buildings known as the Army Clothing Storage Depot at Alipore were purchased from the Military Department to provide accommodation for Police and Jail Officers. The provision of pipe water connection in the Reserve Police Lines at Burdwan was taken up. Considerable progress was made with the construction of the Civil Station at Alipur-Duars, and work continued on the slipway at Narainganj which it is hoped will be completed next year.

The Consulting Architect, Bengal, Mr. W. I. Keir, has submitted the following report regarding the more important projects prepared in his office:—

*Report by the Consulting Architect to the Government of Bengal on the Architectural Work of the Province for the year 1926-27.*

HOSPITALS.

*Calcutta.*

(*1*) *Medical College, Eden Hospital Extension.*—Complete working drawings were made for this project which is a three-storey building on a high plinth and will accommodate 38 patients and includes two operation theatres with galleries for students, labour rooms, the necessary offices, also quarters for two House Surgeons and one Sister. The building was commenced in September, 1926, and was completed up to ground floor level by the end of February, 1927. The estimated cost of the project is Rs. 5,26,495.

(2) *Medical College—additions and alterations to Pathological and Physiological Block.*—This work was commenced in August, 1926, from drawings prepared in this office in September, 1924. Estimated cost Rs. 79,420.

*Barisal (Eastern Circle).*

(3) *Hospital for Reserve Police Lines.*—Complete working drawings were made and supplied to the Superintending Engineer for this project consisting of a two-storey building to provide accommodation for 28 constables and 4 sub-Inspectors with necessary operation room, etc.

*Chittagong (Eastern Circle).*

(4) *Clive Hospital.*—Sketch plans were made for a two-storey extension to accommodate 20 more patients with quarters on the roof for European nurses and quarters on the roof of the existing building for eight Indian nurses.

EDUCATION.

*Calcutta.*

(5) *Bethune College.*—Sketch plans were prepared and sent to the Director of Public Instruction for extensions consisting of (*1*) a two-storey new college building with accommodation for 120 students and necessary common rooms etc., (*2*) a two-storey new school building with accommodation for 370 pupils and necessary common rooms, etc.; (*3*) a one-storey assembly hall to provide seating accommodation for 375 persons; and (*4*) quarters for the college servants. An approximate estimate was also prepared for the scheme amounting to Rs. 4,29,000 *plus* Rs. 10,000 for dismantling existing buildings in the compound, etc.

(6) *Gokhale Memorial Girls School.*—Sketch plans were prepared for a two-storey building to provide schooling accommodation for 200 girls, with hostel room for 40 girls and mistresses, etc., and quarters for Head Mistress on the roof.

(7) *Medical College, Dental School.*—In connection with this school sketch plans were prepared for a Hospital, two Surgeons' quarters, a three-storey hostel building to accommodate 50 students with necessary dining rooms and kitchens and servants quarters.

(8) *Medical College, Radium Institute.*—Sketch plans were prepared for a three-storey building for this purpose.

(9) *Islamia College.*—This building was taken over in July, 1926. The estimated cost of the building was Rs. 4,30,525 and the actual cost after completion was approximately Rs. 4,27,940.

*Berhampore-Murshidabad (Central Circle).*

(10) *Medical School.*—Complete sketch plans were prepared showing a proposal to utilise the existing Mental Hospital buildings as a Medical School.

*Bhola (Eastern Circle).*

(11) *Government High School.*—Half inch details and working drawings were completed from the ⅛ inch scale plans prepared in June, 1922, for this project. The project comprises a two-storey building to accommodate 19 class rooms, a library, Head Masters room, Teachers' room etc.

*Chinsurah (Central Circle).*

(12) *Hooghly Madrassa.*—A line plan and approximate estimate amounting to Rs. 3,91,000 for this project was submitted for inspection and criticism by the Superintending Engineer.

*Chittagong (Eastern Circle).*

(13) *Medical School.*—One-eighth inch scale drawings were prepared for a morgue, an anatomical block and a laboratory block in connection with this scheme.

*Jalpaiguri (Northern Circle).*

(14) *Medical School.*—Drawings similar to those for the Chittagong Medical School were also prepared for this project and a rough estimate for the same was prepared by the Superintending Engineer amounting to Rs. 2,37,500.

*Perojpur (Eastern Circle).*

(15) *High School.*—In connection with this project sketch plans were prepared and sent to the Director of Public Instruction for a Head Master's quarters and for a two-storey school building comprising 15 class rooms, library, common rooms for teachers and for boys and the usual offices, etc.

*Serampore (Central Circle).*

(16) *Government Weaving Institute.*—Sketch plans and ⅛ inch scale working drawings were prepared for a two-storey building in connection with the scheme and sent to the Superintending Engineer for the purpose of preparing an estimate.

RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS.

*Calcutta.*

(17) *Quarters for three Deputy Superintendents, Bengal Government Press.* Two alternative sketch plans were made for these quarters; the first for a two-storey block containing three quarters each occupying a portion of the ground and first floors with an approximate estimate amounting to Rs. 63,000; the second for a three-storey building containing one flat on each floor with an approximate estimate amounting to Rs. 52,000.

(18) *Principal's Residence, David Hare Training College.*—A revised plan and an approximate estimate amounting to Rs. 55,500 were prepared in August, 1926; and in February, 1927, a further revised plan with approximate estimate of Rs. 43,500 was made.

(19) *Head Master's Residence, David Hare Training College.*—A revised plan with an approximate estimate of Rs. 39,800 was prepared in August, 1926, and a further revised plan with reduced floor area prepared and sent to the Director of Public Instruction in November 1926.

(20) *Government House servants' quarters.*—In connection with this scheme sketch plans were prepared for the rebuilding of No. 9, Government Place.

(21) *Medical College Hostel.*—A revised lay-out plan was prepared for this project to accommodate 404 students and 4 Superintendents in three three-storey buildings and one four-storey building with a single storey common room and separate Hindu and Muhammadan dining rooms and kitchens. A rough approximate estimate was prepared in connection with this revised scheme amounting to Rs. 5,37,000 and sent to the Secretary, Local Self-Government Department.

(22) *Quarters for Photo-Litho Officers, Survey of India.*—A sketch plan was prepared for these quarters in connection with a suggested site near the Park Street Tram terminus.

(23) *Principal's Residence, Veterinary College, Belgatchia.*—Working drawings were completed for this project and the building commenced in September, 1926, at an estimated cost of Rs. 37,273.

*Burdwan (Central Circle).*

(24) *Medical School Hostel.*—The working drawings for this project were completed during the year; building work commenced in May, 1925, and was in progress throughout the year. The building which is two stories high will accommodate 101 students and 2

Superintendents with necessary common rooms, etc., and detached single storey dining room and kitchen. The estimated cost is Rs. 1,54,319.

*Chittagong (Eastern Circle).*

(25) *Muhammadan Hostel.*—The building which is two stories high and will accommodate 60 students and an Assistant Superintendent with students' common room was commenced in February, 1926, and was practically completed during the year at an estimated cost of Rs. 90,530.

*Dacca (Eastern Circle).*

(26) *Ahsanullah Engineering School Hostel.*—Working drawings were made and supplied to the Superintending Engineer in order to enable him to prepare a detailed estimate. The project consists of a two-storey building to accommodate 236 students with necessary common room, etc., separate single storey dining rooms and kitchens for Hindus and Muhammadans; and two separate double-storied quarters for Superintendents.

*Krishnagar (Central Circle).*

(27) *College Hostel.*—Sketch plans and working drawings were made and supplied for this project. The building which will be two stories high was commenced in August, 1926, and will accommodate 65 students and an Assistant Superintendent. The estimated cost is Rs. 86,700.

*Kurseong (Northern Circle).*

(28) *Dow Hill Girls School, New Dormitory Building.*—The southern wing and central block which were commenced in November, 1923, were completed in May, 1926. A revised estimate of Rs. 3,70,545 was sanctioned in August, 1926, with an allocation of Rs. 2,33,695 for the portion taken up and Rs. 1,36,850 for the remaining wing not yet commenced. The portion of the building now completed will accommodate 90 girls, 3 matrons and 3 mistresses.

*Mymensingh (Eastern Circle).*

(29) *Medical School Hostel.*—Sketch plans were made for a building to accommodate 100 students with two common rooms and separate dining rooms and kitchens.

COURTS AND OFFICES.

*Calcutta.*

(30) *New Public Office Record Rooms.*—At the request of the Superintending Engineer plans were made for this project.

(31) *Alipore Sub-Judges' Court Building.*—Drawings for a first floor extension were supplied to enable the Executive Engineer to prepare a detailed estimate.

(32) *Civil Court, Howrah.*—A revised sketch plan was supplied for the project.

*Chandpur (Eastern Circle).*

(33) *Quadruple Munsif.*—The remaining details were prepared and supplied for this building which was commenced in June, 1925, and was in progress throughout the year. The estimated cost is Rs. 1,42,445.

*Dacca (Eastern Circle).*

(34) *Additions to Magistrates and Collector's Court.*—The main two-storey building comprising mainly a large record room, guard room and malkhana, six rooms for Police officers and Collector and rooms for necessary office staff accommodation, was commenced in June, 1925, and was practically completed during the year. The estimated cost of the whole project is Rs. 1,75,502.

*Gopalganj (Eastern Circle).*

(35) *Subdivisional Officer's Court.*—This building commenced in November, 1925, and was in progress throughout the year. The estimated cost is Rs. 1,55,944.

*Katwa (Central Circle).*

(36) *Double Munsif.*—One-eighth inch scale working drawings were made and supplied to the Superintending Engineer.

*Serampore (Central Circle).*

(37) *Treble Munsif.*—This building commenced in July, 1925, and was in progress throughout the year. The estimated cost is Rs. 64,765.

POLICE.

*Calcutta.*

(38) *Public Vehicles Department, Ballygunge.*—The remaining details were worked out for this project. The main building was commenced in February, 1926, at an estimated cost of Rs. 3,35,736 and the out-houses to the same in October, 1926, at an estimated cost of Rs. 79,270. The building will provide in addition to the necessary office rooms living accommodation for 31 men in barracks

and flats for four Inspectors, eight Sergeants, one Assistant Commissioner and one Deputy Commissioner.

(39) *Burra Bazar Section House.*—A rough estimate of Rs. 3,20,000 was administratively approved by Government and Rs. 2,00,000 provided in the Budget for 1927-28. A revised plan was prepared but preparation of working drawings was delayed by communications from the Calcutta Improvement Trust and municipality suggesting a possibility of the size of the site being affected by road widening schemes.

(40) *Burtollah Section House.*—Working drawings were completed and the building commenced in September, 1926, at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,25,901. In addition to the usual office accommodation etc., the building (four-stories high) will provide barrack space for 93 men and four flats for officers.

(41) *Married Sergeants' Quarters, Chittaranjan Avenue.*—Sketch plans were prepared for a building four stories high to provide 12 flats for married Sergeants with servants' quarters on the roof. A rough estimate of Rs. 1,20,500 was administratively approved by Government and Rs. 1,00,000 provided in the budget for 1927-28.

(42) *Jorasanko Section House.*—The remaining details were supplied for this building which was commenced in June, 1925, and was completed in October, 1926. The estimated cost was Rs. 1,46,447 and the actual cost was approximately Rs. 1,34,314. The building (four stories high) provides in addition to the usual office accommodation barrack space for 98 men and six flats for officers.

(43) *Kapalitola Section House.*—This project was completed in March, 1926. The estimated cost was Rs. 2,06,974 and the actual cost Rs. 1,84,255 exclusive of cost of site and electric work. The project includes two three-story buildings, one providing accommodation for the necessary offices, etc., and flats for eight officers and the other barrack accommodation for 186 men.

(44) *Lall Bazar Police Head quarters.*—One-eighth inch scale working drawings were supplied for a four-storey building to provide accommodation for 19 married Sergeants, 34 single Sergeants and one Deputy Commissioner with a large drill hall on the ground floor. The estimate amounting to Rs. 5,51,388 was sanctioned, tenders were called for, and a sum of Rs. 1,50,000 provided in the Budget for 1927-28.

(45) *Moochipara Section House.*—The remaining details were supplied for this building which was commenced in June, 1925, and was in progress throughout the year. The building (three-stories

high) will provide the usual office accommodation, etc., barrack space for 93 men and four flats for officers. The estimated cost is Rs. 1,37,119.

(46) *Manicktola Section House.*—Revised $\frac{1}{8}$" scale drawings were prepared at an approximate estimate (excluding plumbing and electrical work) of Rs. 1,52,936. The building, four stories high, was designed to provide the usual office accommodation, barrack space for 92 men and flats for eight officers.

(47) *Park Street Section House.*—The remaining details were supplied for this building which was commenced in November, 1925, and was completed in July, 1926. The estimated cost was Rs. 83,191 and the actual cost approximately Rs. 74,331. The building, three-stories high, provides barrack accommodation for 110 men and the usual office accommodation, etc.

(48) *Traffic Control Barracks, Porabazar.*—Sketch plans, and approximate estimate amounting to Rs. 1,51,000 were prepared. Administrative approval was given to the scheme; $\frac{1}{8}$" scale working drawing and quantities were prepared in this office and forwarded to the Superintending Engineer. The building is designed to be three-stories high with servants' quarters on the roof and to provide barrack accommodation for 102 men and six flats for officers.

(49) *Special Branch Barracks and Quarters, Porabazar.*—Sketch plans and approximate estimate amounting to Rs. 3,19,000 were prepared. The building is designed in two blocks, three and four stories high, to provide barrack accommodation for 35 men, and flats for 16 Inspectors and one Assistant Commissioner of Police.

(50) *Shampukur Section House.*—Working drawings were prepared for this project and an approximate estimate amounting to Rs. 1,49,250. The building, three stories in height, is intended to provide barrack accommodation for 91 men and flats for four officers in addition to the usual office accommodation.

(51) *Taltollah Section House.*—Working drawings were completed and the building commenced in July, 1926, at an estimated cost of Rs. 81,898. The expenditure during the year was Rs. 30,254. The building when completed will be three stories high and provide the usual office accommodation, barrack space for 39 men and two flats for officers.

### Miscellaneous.

*Calcutta.*

(52) *Alipore Clothing Factory site.*—A further revised sketch plan was prepared for the utilisation of this site.

(53) *Indian Museum, New Zoological Survey, Fire Proof Building.*—A sketch plan was made and a site selected in the Museum compound and an approximate estimate prepared amounting to Rs. 5,00,000.

(54) *Sir Ronald Ross Memorial.*—A small memorial gateway was designed for this purpose and erected in the Presidency General Hospital compound railing facing the Victoria Memorial.

**Communications.**

362. The total expenditure on Communications during the year under report amounted to Rs. 32,91,201 of which Rs. 1,58,097 was spent by the Government of India on Central Communications.

The total length of metalled roads in the Province rose from 3,410 to 3,434 miles and the length of unmetalled roads fell from 34,273 to 34,261 miles. These figures include 2509 miles of metalled and 33,549 miles of unmetalled roads maintained by district and local funds, but exclude roads maintained by municipalities.

**Calcutta Maidan.**

363. The roads on the Calcutta Maidan continued to receive the careful attention of Government. Three suitable bus stands were constructed with a view to preventing damage to the tarmacadam where the buses are parked.

The attention of Government was drawn to the very bad condition of the Barrackpore Trunk Road, which was under the control of the District Board of 24-Parganas. After a careful consideration of the question it was decided that the Public Works Department should take over the road again and make it suitable for modern traffic conditions. The work was accordingly taken in hand, and 2″ tarmacadam was being laid from Calcutta to Palta. Certain portions of the road, *viz.*, at Talla, Tittaghur and Barrackpore have been completed.

The improvement of the Grand Trunk Road from the Tramway Terminus in Howrah to the 19th mile, which was in progress last year, was completed with the exception of the portion to be diverted near the Bally Bridge, work in connection with which will be carried out by the Railway authorities in 1927-28.

The construction of a 6 feet road from Rangamati to Waggasurra leading to Chandraghona, which was started last year, was in progress.

The bridge over the Haridaspur Khal at the 27th mile of the Calcutta-Jessore Road, which was in progress last year, was completed.

364. The improvement of the Rishi Road from Teesta to Kalimpong was completed. Preliminary work in connection with the construction of a bridge over the Teesta River was undertaken at the close of the year. Materials were collected to widen and improve the Rinkingpong Road at Kalimpong (now the Ridge Road). Darjeeling.

Special repairs to the roads in the Darjeeling district were practically completed. The work of dismantling and replacing 6 wooden bridges in the Terai by steel and concrete bridges capable of carrying a 10 ton steam-roller was continued. The two bridges, in connection with which work was in progress last year, were completed.

365. The work on the construction of the road from Mainaguri to Dhupguri, including the training and bridging of the Jaldhaka river, was still in progress. It is expected that it will be completed and the road opened to traffic in the cold weather of 1928-29. The improvement and metalling of the last 2¼ miles of the Janti-Dhowla Road and the construction of a new road from Alipur to Rajabhatkhawa were taken in hand and it is hoped the former will be completed by the end of 1927. Duars.

Special repairs to the Dimdima bridge, which was seriously damaged during the rains of 1924, were nearing completion, and 7 wooden bridges, of spans varying from 10 to 40 feet, were replaced by permanent structures, while work was in progress in the case of 14 more.

366. Arboricultural operations along roads were carried out as far as funds permitted. Arboriculture.

367. Mr. Henry Arthur Crouch, Consulting Architect to this Government, retired on 2nd April, 1926, and Mr. W. I. Keir, Assistant Architect, succeeded him as Consulting Architect. Establishment.

Mr. H. F. D. Jacob, Executive Engineer, Electric Division, proceeded on leave preparatory to retirement in January, 1927, and Mr. J. D. A. Vincent was appointed to succeed him on a five years' contract.

To fill up the shortage in the cadres of the Bengal Engineering Service and the Subordinate Engineering Service two Assistant Engineers and nine Overseers have been recruited during the year.

## Railways.

368. With the exception of the following light railways, which are to some extent under the control of the Government of Bengal, Administration.

all important lines in the Province are under the direct control of the Government of India, Railway Department (Railway Board) :—

| | Gauge. | Length in miles. |
|---|---|---|
| Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway .. .. | 2′ 0″ | 51·07 |
| Bengal Provincial Railway (Tarkeswar to Tribeni) .. .. .. | 2′ 6″ | 33·27 |
| Howrah-Amta Light Railway .. .. | 2′ 0″ | 43·87 |
| Howrah-Sheakhalla Light Railway .. | 2′ 0″ | 19·75 |
| Baraset-Basirhat Light Railway .. .. | 2′ 6″ | 52·24 |
| Jessore-Jhenidah Railway .. .. | 2′ 6″ | 36·75 |
| Total .. | | 236·95 |

Mileage.

369. The Krishnagar-Nabadwipghat Branch of the Eastern Bengal Railway (length 7·75 miles) was opened to traffic during the year. The total mileage of railways in Bengal open to traffic on 31st March, 1927, rose therefore from 3,281·17 miles to 3,288·92 miles.

Surveys.

370. During the year the following surveys were sanctioned by the Railway Board:

(1) A reconnaissance survey for a line of railway on the metre gauge from Gauripur (Mymensingh) to Gauhati *via* Bhadurabad, a distance of about 240 miles.

(2) A detailed survey for a metre gauge line from Mantala, a station on the Assam Bengal Railway, to Chatalpara, a distance of 28 miles.

(3) A detailed survey for a metre gauge line from near Begumkhan to Balla, a distance of about 12 miles.

(4) A detailed survey for a metre gauge line from Chittagong to Nazirhat, a distance of about 20 miles.

(5) A detailed survey for a metre gauge line from Feni, a station on the Chittagong Laksam Section of the Assam Bengal Railway, to Bilonia, a distance of about 17 miles.

(6) A survey for a metre gauge line from a point near Damohani station on the Bengal-Duars Railway to a point near Bhotepatti station, a distance of about 6 miles.

(7) A reconnaissance survey for a line of railway on the broad gauge from Amnura, a station on the Kathihar Godagari Section of the Eastern Bengal Railway, to Nawabganj, a distance of about 9 miles.

(8) A survey for a broad gauge line of railway from Rajbari to Jessore *via* Kamarkhali, a distance of about 56 miles.

(9) An engineering survey for a broad gauge line from Sainthia to Bausi with a branch to Baidyanath, a distance of about 84 and 30 miles respectively.

(10) A reconnaissance survey for a line of railway on the broad gauge from Faridpur to Barisal, a distance of about 82 miles.

(11) An engineering reconnaissance survey of three possible connections between the Eastern Bengal Railway and Bengal-Duars Railway, a total distance of about 50 miles—

(*a*) From Siliguri *via* Sevoke to Bagrakot (Broad gauge).
(*b*) From Siliguri *via* Phulbarighat to Bagrakot (broad gauge).
(*c*) From Hamiltonganj to Madarihat (metre gauge).

(12) A detailed survey for a line of railway from Dacca to Aricha, a distance of about 46 miles.

(13) A survey for a line of railway on the broad gauge from Contai Road to Contai, a distance of about 34 miles.

New construction.

371. The following lines were sanctioned for construction during the year:—

(1) A metre gauge line from Netrokona, a station on the Mymensingh Bhairab Bazar Railway to Mohanganj, a distance of 17·43 miles.

(2) A line of railway on the broad gauge from Baruipur to Lakshmikantapur, a distance of about 23 miles.

Broad gauge to Siliguri.

372. The broad gauge line from Parbatipur to Siliguri was opened for passenger traffic on the 30th September, 1926. It has been laid on the embankment of the original metre gauge line which will now be dismantled between Saidpur and Siliguri. From Parbatipur to Saidpur both broad and metre gauge tracks have been provided on the same sleepers with one rail common to both gauges.

Krishnagar-Nabadwipghat Light Railway.

373. The Krishnagar-Nabadwipghat Light Railway, an extension of the Ranaghat-Krishnagar Branch Railway, was opened for passenger traffic on the 30th June, 1926. It has been laid with the material recovered when the Aistala Ghat-Santipur Section of this branch railway was converted to broad gauge in 1925.

Faridpur-Charmaguria Railway.

374. The report on the proposed Faridpur-Charmaguria Railway showed that the line would not be remunerative. With a view to make it remunerative, it was proposed to build a harbour at Charmaguria to deal with the river traffic now dealt with at Goalundo. This proposal was investigated by the engineers of the Eastern Bengal Railway; but from their report it appeared that the scheme was unworkable as such a harbour would silt up almost as quickly as it was excavated. The project was therefore abandoned for the time being.

Ishurdi-Pabna-Sadhuganj Railway.

375. In view of the poor financial prospects of the proposed Ishurdi-Pabna-Sadhuganj Railway, the Railway Board accepted

the recommendation of the Agent, Eastern Bengal Railway, that the project should be held in abeyance for the present. Instructions have since been issued by the Railway Board to the Agent to re-examine the project.

Jessore-Jhenidah Railway. Extension.

376. The report and estimates prepared by Messrs. Kar and Company, Managing Agents of the Jhenidah Railway Syndicate Limited, for the construction of an extension of the Jessore-Jhenidah Railway to Magura were submitted to the Railway Board for consideration.

## Irrigation Department.

### Canals (Irrigation and Navigation).

[Administration Report of the Irrigation Department for the year 1926-27.]

Constitution of the Department.

377. Commencement of work in connection with the Damodar Canal Project in the Hooghly and Burdwan districts necessitated certain changes in the constitution of the Department. A temporary Division, called the Damodar Canal Division, with headquarters at Burdwan, was formed during the year with three Subdivisions. The Division was placed under the direct control of the Chief Engineer of the Department.

378. The following statement shows the areas irrigated during the year as compared with the average of the triennial ending March, 1926:—

| | Midnapore Canal. | | | Eden Canal. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kharif (including hot weather). | Rabi. | Total. | Kharif (including hot weather). | Rabi. | Total. |
| | Acres. | Acres. | Acres. | Acres. | Acres. | Acres. |
| Average of the triennium ending March, 1926 | 73,956 | 825 | 74,781 | 21,418 | 489 | 21,907 |
| For 1926-27 .. | 74,032 | .. | 74,032 | 21,113 | 447 | 21,560 |

The following statement shows the lengths of canals and distributaries which were in operation during the year:—

| | Midnapore Canal. | Eden Canal. |
|---|---|---|
| | Miles. | Miles. |
| Main Canal Irrigation .. .. | 53·00 | 27·5 |
| Branch Canal .. .. .. | 16·75 | .. |
| Distributaries including minor and village channels .. .. .. | 284·97 | 17·6 |
| Navigable channels .. .. .. | 69·75 | .. |

379. The following statement shows the traffic on the navigable canals during 1926-27 as compared with the average of the triennium ending March, 1926:—

| | | Midnapore Canal. | | Hijili Tidal Canal. | | Calcutta and Eastern Canals including Sundarbans Steamer Route. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Average of triennium ending March, 1926. | For the year 1926-27. | Average of triennium ending March, 1926. | For the year 1926-27. | Average of triennium ending March, 1926. | For the year 1926-27. |
| Length of open canal | Miles | 69½ | 69½ | 49½ | 49½ | 1,184 | 1,184 |
| Receipts .. | Rs. | 57,025 | 49,451 | 1,05,251 | 62,122 | 4,55,096 | 4,17,660 |
| Tonnage of boats by canal measurement | Tons | 4,30,068 | 2,35,772 | 2,75,337 | 1,58,379 | 11,04,845 | 10,52,819 |
| Estimated weight of cargo .. | Tons | 30,006 | 31,585 | 86,263 | 42,047 | 7,87,785 | 6,45,214 |
| Estimated value of goods .. | Rs. | 47,14,760 | 51,32,488 | 92,21,996 | 55,81,621 | 6,87,65,965 | 5,89,27,850 |
| Estimated value of rafts .. | Rs. | 17,968 | 10,530 | 7,546 | 370 | 5,80,552 | 11,73,803 |

| | | Madaripore Bhil Route. | | Orissa Coast Canal. | | Nadia Rivers. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Average of triennium ending March, 1926. | For the year 1926-27. | Average of triennium ending March, 1926. | For the year 1926-27. | Average of triennium ending March, 1926. | For the year 1926-27. |
| Length of open canal | Miles. | 38 | 38 | 54½ | 54½ | 439½ | 478½ |
| Receipts .. | Rs. | 3,26,737 | 3,80,573 | 30,259 | 27,866 | Thrown open to free navigation from the 1st September, 1923. | |
| Tonnage of boats by canal measurement | Tons | 9,43,509 | 8,40,689 | 1,44,753 | 1,05,806 | | |
| Estimated weight of cargo .. | Tons | 14,22,282 | 13,15,133 | 46,126 | 29,498 | | |
| Estimated value of goods .. | Rs. | 19,74,68,758 | 18,39,42,492 | 42,25,142 | 36,43,205 | | |
| Estimated value of rafts .. | Rs. | 6,608 | 11,383 | 17,679 | .. | | |

380. In accordance with the instructions of the Government of India, the discharges of certain rivers were recorded during the year. The information collected should be invaluable in solving the problems arising out of the serious floods that have been responsible for so much damage in recent years.

381. There were no changes in the heads of account under which the receipts and expenditure of the department are adjusted. Classification of works.

## Embankment and Drainage Works.

Expenditure.

382. The expenditure on embankment and drainage works including charges for establishment and tools and plant was Rs. 12,69,521, against Rs. 13,57,434 in 1925-26.

Lengths of Embankments.

383. The total length of embankments of all classes maintained by Government during the year was 1,298 miles 3,360 feet as in the preceding year.

Works carried out under—(a) Bengal Drainage Act, VI of 1880.

384. The Dankuni, Howrah, Rajapur and Barrojolla drainage works in the Howrah district were maintained during the year at a cost of Rs. 34,889, against Rs. 17,636 in the previous year.

The maintenance and repairs of the works in connection with the drainage of Berhampore town and flushing of the Bistoopur Bhil cost Rs. 1,052, against Rs. 1,608 last year. An expenditure of Rs. 614 was incurred for the maintenance of the Gobra Nala, and removal of water hyacinth therefrom.

(b) Bengal Sanitary Drainage Act, VIII of 1895.

385. The Magrahat drainage scheme, which was carried out under the Sanitary Drainage Act, was maintained at a cost of Rs. 32,737, against Rs. 21,901 of the previous year. The increased expenditure was due to extensive repairs to sluices and locks.

(c) Bengal Embankment Act, II of 1882.

386. The Churial drainage works were maintained at a cost of Rs. 1,596, against an expenditure of Rs. 2,885 in the previous year.

The transactions of the year are briefly described in the following summary which is divided for convenience into circles of superintendence:—

### South-Western Circle.

### Major Irrigation Works (Unproductive).

*Midnapore Canal.*

Capital outlay.

387. No capital expenditure was incurred on the Canal. The total capital outlay to the end of the year was Rs. 83,08,728.

Rainfall.

388. The rainfall at Midnapore was 80·54 inches as compared with a normal of about 61 inches.

Irrigation.

389. The area irrigated from the Canal was 74,032 acres against 75,698 acres in 1925-26. The cash realisation on account of water rates was Rs. 1,80,877, of which Rs. 2,575 was remitted against Rs. 1,82,944 and Rs. 933, respectively, of the previous year. The total demand for water rates including the

arrears was Rs. 1,90,999, against Rs. 1,86,390. The increase is due to the enhancement in water rates of renewal leases.

391. The navigation receipts amounted to Rs. 49,451, against Rs. 60,320 in 1925-26. The decrease was due to closures for silt clearance and repairs to lock gates. Navigation.

392. The gross revenue and working expenses amounted to Rs. 2,69,263 and Rs. 2,43,458, respectively, against Rs. 2,81,623 and Rs. 2,20,774, respectively, in the previous year. The net revenue of the year was Rs. 25,805, against Rs. 60,849. Financial results.

## Minor Irrigation Works.

393. The area irrigated from the Canal during the year was 21,560 acres, against 23,836 and 21,010 acres in the two preceding years. The gross revenue derived was Rs. 43,282, as compared with Rs. 40,047 in the preceding year and the working expenses amounted to Rs. 77,332, as compared with Rs. 50,258. Eden Canal.

## Irrigation schemes in Western Bengal.

394. Work was started during the year in connection with the Damodar Canal scheme—a major irrigation project in the Hooghly and Burdwan districts.

In the Birbhum district, an irrigation scheme called the Bakreswar Canal Scheme, which is estimated to cost Rs. 4,90,576 and designed to irrigate about 10,000 acres of rice land, was sanctioned. The scheme will be carried out under the provisions of the Bengal Irrigation Act, III of 1876. Another irrigation scheme, named the Kashianala Scheme, in the same district, to irrigate 2,000 acres was taken up under the Bengal Agricultural and Sanitary Improvement Act, VI of 1920. In the Bankura district the Amjhore weir was nearly completed. The detailed survey of the Berai Canal and the preparation of this project were also completed. This canal will irrigate 9,000 acres. In the Midnapore district, schemes for the Dolong, Jhargram, Baital and Ausabandi canals were under preparation. Several proposals for extending irrigation on the Eden Canal in Burdwan were enquired into and useful results are likely to follow.

Besides those mentioned about 70 small schemes are under investigation.

## Major Navigation Works (Unproductive).

395. There was no outlay chargeable to the capital account of the Canal. The total capital outlay on this Canal to date is Rs. 25,50,805. The gross revenue and working expenses Hijili Tidal Canal.

amounted to Rs. 65,513 and Rs. 43,664, respectively, as against Rs. 1,07,514 and Rs. 22,359 in 1925-26. The net balance of revenue for the year was Rs. 21,849, as against Rs. 85,155 in the preceding year. The falling off in receipts is due to the damage to crops over a large area owing to extensive floods in the area served by the Canal.

## Minor Navigation Works.

**Orissa Coast Canal.**

396. This Canal, which is used for navigation only, lies partly in the Bengal Presidency and partly in the province of Bihar and Orissa. The length within the Bengal Presidency is 54·5 miles. The receipts and working expenses were Rs. 31,255 and Rs. 22,536, respectively, as against Rs. 39,365 and Rs. 12,398 in the previous year. The balance of net revenue was Rs. 8,719, against Rs. 26,967 in the preceding year. The traffic on this Canal was also affected by floods.

**Gaighatta and Buxi khal.**

397. This *khal*, about 7½ miles in length, is a connecting channel between two tidal rivers—the Rupnarain and the Damodar. The *khal* has been leased out for six years, from the 15th June, 1921, at a rental of Rs. 2,000 on condition that the lessees maintain the *khal* in condition.

**Nadia Rivers.**

398. The approximate length of the channels comprised in the Nadia Rivers is 478½ miles as detailed below:—

| | Miles. |
|---|---|
| (1) Faracca channel from the Ganges near Kaliganj to old Biswanathpur entrance. ... | 8 |
| (2) Bhagirathi river from Biswanathpur entrance to the junction with the Jalangi at Nadia ... | 139 |
| (3) Hooghly river from Nadia to the Mathabhanga junction near Chakda. ... | 32 |
| (4) Bhairab-Jalangi from entrance to Nadia. ... | 163½ |
| (5) Mathabhanga from entrance to junction with the Hooghly. ... | 136 |
| Total ... | 478½ |

The principal change during the year in the different entrances from the Ganges was that the Dhulian entrance closed and the entrance at Kaliganj improved.

**Bhagirathi.**

399. The river Bhagirathi, including the portion of the Farracca channel from Kaliganj, is 147 miles in length from its entrance at Kaliganj on the Ganges to its junction with the Jalangi at Nadia. There being very little boat traffic above

Jeaganj in the dry season, no bandalling was done in the Upper Bhagirathi. Local country boat traffic was, however, maintained up to the end of January, 1927. In the Middle Bhagirathi, training works by bandalling were commenced on the 24th October, 1926. Out of 20 shoals, 4 shoals with a total length of about 16,000 feet were trained during the year. The actual length trained in 1926 was 9,200 feet, against 9,400 feet in the preceding year. Local boat traffic in coal and miscellaneous goods and the conveyance of passengers between Azimganj and Berhampore were maintained throughout the year. In the Lower Bhagirathi only 4 shoals with a total length of 13,000 feet were trained. Boat traffic between Katwa and Navadwip (Nadia) and the steamer service of the Calcutta Steam Navigation Company from Calcutta to Swarupganj *via* Navadwip were maintained throughout the year.

Bhairab-Jalangi River.

400. This river has its offtake from the Ganges about 2 miles below the present Lalgolaghat railway station and joins the Bhagirathi at Nadia. It is divided into two parts:—

| | Miles. |
|---|---|
| (1) Bhairab river from the entrance to Muktearpore ... | 60 |
| (2) Jalangi river from Muktearpore to Nadia ... | 103½ |

Only 3 shoals below Krishnagar, measuring about 6,000 feet, were trained, against 7,660 feet in the previous year. There was no steamer service in the river but boat traffic was maintained from July to October.

Mathabhanga.

401. The Mathabhanga river has its offtake from the Ganges at Dayarampur as before and falls into the Hooghly at Chakdah. The river was surveyed after the flood season from Dewanganj to Dayarampur.

Ganges river from Rajmahal to Goalundo.

402. The conservancy of the river Ganges from Rajmahal to Goalundo continued to be carried out departmentally. An officer of the Steamer Companies was employed to execute the work on behalf of Government under the direct supervision of the Executive Engineer, Nadia Rivers Division. Thirteen shoals were trained, against 11 in the previous year, 7 of these being new shoals. The total expenditure incurred on the work was Rs. 26,340, against Rs. 18,572 in the previous year.

Discharge observations.

403. Observations were taken at 4 stations, *viz.*, 2 on the Bhagirathi, 1 on the Mathabhanga and 1 on the Hooghly, up to end of March, 1927, to ascertain the discharges of the feeder rivers. The total expenditure incurred on these observations was Rs. 4,508, against Rs. 4,426 in the previous year.

Gorai river.

404. The Gorai takes off from the Ganges about 12 miles below the Hardinge Bridge. To record changes of the river during the year sections were taken from the entrance to the Kaliganj junction and a survey of the right bank of the Ganges for 5 miles above and below the Gorai entrance was made.

Flood remedial measures.

405. In the Damodar Division the Hoorhoora and Buxi *khals*, the dredging of which was completed during the previous year, acted as efficient flood escapes for the area submerged by floods from the Damodar in the lower spill area.

In connection with the flood remedial measures near Ghatal, Rs. 2,497 were spent on collection of materials required for the Kushpota Escape.

Anti-malarial and drainage works.

406. A sum of Rs. 25,793 was expended on the Amirabad drainage project in the Contai subdivision of the Midnapore district. This is one of the 5 schemes which were worked out after the flood of 1913, viz., (1) Peechaboni, (2) Amirabad, (3) Panipia, (4) Dhunia-Barunda and (5) Hijili or Russelpore, with a view to relieve the southern portion of the Midnapore district of periodical water-logging due to silting up of the natural tidal channels. Of the remaining four, the Peechaboni scheme has already been completed and projects for the remaining three are ready.

An estimate amounting to Rs. 1,51,358 for flushing about 60 stagnant miles of the Bhairab river in the Meherpore subdivision of the Nadia district with water from the Jalangi was sanctioned and the work started and Rs. 18,619 were expended. Work on a similar scheme for flushing 40 miles of the Gobra Nala in the Murshidabad district also commenced during the year: the expenditure was Rs. 56,157, against the sanctioned estimate of Rs. 2,97,079.

Surveys and investigations.

407. With a view to supplying water for flushing old river beds, enquiries were made to ascertain whether a supply of fresh water could be found to deal with the following cases: the Gurguria and Moragagni *khals* in the Nadia district, the Bamnida *khal* in Murshidabad and the Nabaganga in Nadia and Jessore. The project for flushing the Kodla and Betna basins in Jessore was under preparation and in the Howrah district the Amta scheme was revised. The Gangakhali-Suadigi project in Midnapore has been completed and has been referred to the Civil Officers. The Dhunia and Barunda projects are ready and are under the consideration of Government.

River floods, breaches, etc.

408. There were five floods in the river Cossye which caused 4 breaches in the Cossye embankments, resulting in considerable

damage to crops in the Panskura subdivision. In the Contai and Tumlook subdivisions the country was inundated by heavy rain and before the water could be drained, the Kaliaghai river came down in high flood which exceeded the previous record of 1913; the embankments on both sides were severely breached and large areas on both banks went under deep water causing severe distress. The question of relieving the congestion on the Kaliaghai due to constriction of the river by embankments is the subject of a special enquiry.

In the river Damodar there were 13 comparatively low floods, the highest of which occurred on the 6th September, 1926, the gauge at Edilpur reading 17′ 7″ and that at Amta 21′ 6″ against the highest recorded readings of 20′ 1″ and 23′ 6″ during August, 1913. There were no breaches in the embankments.

There were no floods of importance in the Adjai and Selye.

Round Ghatal in the Midnapore district there were 12 breaches in Dusaspur Circuit, one in Darkeswar Right Embankment and another in Sheikpur Circuit. The work of filling in these breaches was taken up in the cold weather and has since been completed.

## Southern Circle.

409. Under capital account of the Calcutta and Eastern Canals there was a receipt of Rs. 38,641 on account of the hire of the dredgers *Foyers* and *Alexandra*. The navigation receipts from the canals amounted to Rs. 4,17,660, against Rs. 4,36,780 of the previous year. The gross receipts and working expenses amounted to Rs. 4,53,334 and Rs. 6,90,930, respectively, against Rs. 4,74,241 and Rs. 6,23,403, respectively, in the previous year. The result shows a deficit of Rs. 2,37,596, against a deficit of Rs. 1,49,162 in the previous year. Calcutta and Eastern Canals.

The more important items on which expenditure was incurred under the revenue account of the canals during the year are noted below:—

*Extensions and Improvement.*

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| (1) Construction of an office building for the Calcutta Canals Subdivision .. .. | 7,159 |
| (2) Reconstruction of the Garia Bridge .. .. | 5,120 |
| (3) Reconstruction of the Dum-Dum bridge (the work was completed during the previous year) .. .. | 50,000 |
| (4) Reconstruction of the Kidderpore bridge (the work was finally completed during the previous year; the payment was on account of liabilities) .. .. | 8,473 |
| (5) Extensions and improvements to fitter's shop, Dhappa | 2,808 |

*Maintenance and Repairs.*

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| (1) Maintenance of canals .. .. .. | 90,790 |
| (2) Dredging the Bhangore *khal* .. .. .. | 1,15,461 |
| (3) Silt clearance of the Kaorapukur *khal* .. .. | 13,619 |
| (4) Working minor dredgers, launches and barges .. | 12,337 |

The regirdering of the Garia Bridge over the Tolly's Nala was taken up during the year at an estimated cost of Rs. 63,213. The new reinforced concrete bridge on the Dum Dum road was opened for traffic and considerable progress was made in reconstructing the Maniktola and Beliaghatta bridges over the Circular Canal, the work being done through the agency of the Calcutta Improvement Trust. The dredging of the Bhangore *khal* was completed at a total expenditure of Rs. 1,46,625.

Sunderbans Steamer Route.

410. No capital expenditure was incurred on this route. The receipts and working expenses amounted to Rs. 66,161 and Rs. 1,21,073, respectively, against Rs. 55,719 and Rs. 4,60,036 in the previous year, the result being a net deficit of Rs. 54,912, against Rs. 4,04,317.

Madaripur Bhil Route.

411. The expenditure debitable to the capital account of the route was Rs. 46,034, of which Rs. 33,920 represents the outlay on works. This sum was mainly spent in preliminary works in connection with the construction of locks and sluices on the Lower Kumar river and in the payment of compensation for damage to crops caused by the dredging operations between Takerhat and Charmaguria during the previous year.

The total capital outlay to the end of the year amounted to Rs. 73,34,892, against the sanctioned estimate of Rs. 75,57,056. The construction estimate was closed with effect from the 31st March, 1917, and the remaining works are being carried out under the rules governing expenditure chargeable to the open capital account.

The receipts and working expenses were Rs. 3,87,005 and Rs. 3,26,782, respectively, against Rs. 3,79,729 and Rs. 2,20,558 in the previous year. The increase in working expenses is due to the dredging of heavy shoals in the Lower Kumar river.

River training works.

412. Bandalling was undertaken as usual to train the shoals in the rivers Dhalleswari and Buriganga to maintain a navigable depth of water during the low water season and also to supply good drinking water to the city of Dacca. Rupees 23,506 were spent. The steamer service was maintained as far as Lalitganj up to the second week of November, 1926, and thereafter as far as Sabhar.

River Nabaganga.

413. This river is the only water communication between the subdivisional town of Magura in the district of Jessore and Khulna. In order to prolong the period during which vessels can ply, bandalling of the principal shoals was done, and the channel was kept navigable all the year round for boats, though the Steamer Company stopped their service from 1st November, 1926. Rupees 4,716 were spent.

Dredging shoals in the rivers Buriganga, Banshai and Lakhya.

414. The three shoals in the river Buriganga, *viz.*, Sadarghat, Postgolla and Pangaon, and the new off-take at Hazratpur were dredged at a cost of Rs. 45,368.

The Porabari shoal in the river Bangshai and the Lakhpur and Muktearpur shoals in the river Lakhya were also dredged at a cost of Rs. 6,089 and Rs. 12,041, respectively.

Protective works.

415. The construction of a retired line of embankment at Akalmegh below Falta on the Hooghly was sanctioned at an estimated cost of Rs. 17,101 and the work of protecting the right bank of the Baigoonbari *khal* in the Mymensingh district was nearly completed. A sum of Rs. 21,171 was spent.

Anti-malarial works.

416. An estimate amounting to Rs. 38,765 for completing the Ichapore and Nowi portions of the Nowi-Sunthi drainage project was sanctioned towards the end of the year. The amount was contributed by the District Board of the 24-Parganas, and an expenditure of Rs. 24,334 was incurred. A revised estimate, amounting to Rs. 4,302 for excavating, at the cost of the District Board of Jessore, a channel connecting the Arool and Bookbhara bhils in that district was sanctioned. The work is a part of the main Arool bhil drainage scheme which was constructed from Government funds. A combined scheme for flushing and drainage of the Selimpore and Burronal bhil in the Jessore district was under preparation.

Agricultural works.

417. An estimate amounting to Rs. 24,370 was sanctioned for the construction of the Dhutkhali sluice in the 24-Parganas embankment. The work could not be started during the year as the site selected was found unsuitable. The sluice is being redesigned.

Surveys and investigations.

418. Surveys of the waterways in the Manickganj subdivision were made and a sum of Rs. 3,600 spent up to the end of the year against the sanctioned estimate of Rs. 5,121. The following surveys were also carried out in the districts of Chittagong, Tippera, Mymensingh, and 24-Parganas at the cost noted against each :—

*Expenditure.*

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| (1) Surveys and investigation of Sonaichari and other silted up *khals* in the district of Chittagong .. | 857 |

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| (2) Survey in connection with the Brahmanbaria Akhaura drainage congestion in the district of Tippera .. | 209 |
| (3) Survey and investigation of Magrazani *khal* in the district of Mymensingh .. .. .. | 125 |
| (4) Survey and investigation of Janakipur *khal* in the district of Mymensingh .. .. .. | 195 |
| (5) Survey and investigation of Jabuna river from Kaliganj to Chingrikhali (24-Parganas) .. .. | 2,044 |

River floods.

419. Rainfall during the year was a little above normal, but no heavy floods occurred in any river in this Circle.

A breach occurred in the 186th mile of the 24-Parganas embankment at Durgapur on the 22nd September, 1926, but was promptly closed.

Grand Trunk Canal project.

420. Work on this Canal was held in abeyance during the year. An expenditure of Rs. 15,527 was incurred on account of the award made by the Special Land Acquisition Judge for reference cases.

The total expenditure on the Canal up to the end of the year including the *Ronaldshay* dredger amounted to Rs. 69,73,412.

Damodar Canal project.

421. This project has been designed to irrigate about 200,000 acres of land, mostly paddy, in the Burdwan and Hooghly districts: at present about 20,000 acres are annually irrigated by the Eden Canal which takes its supply from the river Damodar at Joojooty, 7 miles to the west of Burdwan town. The absence of a weir across the river prevents the canal being supplied with water at the most critical time for the rice crop in October. In order to extend irrigation and to provide an assured supply to the Eden Canal this project for a new canal with its intake about 25 miles to the west of Burdwan has been launched. The Canal has been aligned to pass through the Galsi thana which suffers periodically from scarcity and will pass along the north side of the Grand Trunk Road up to within some 4 miles of Burdwan. From this point a branch canal will supply water to the Eden Canal and the area irrigated will be raised from 20,000 to 54,000 acres.

On the west, north and north-east of the town of Burdwan a considerable length of branch and minor canals will be made from which 126,000 acres of long leases will be irrigated. Water will also be available for the irrigation of other areas under season leases.

The total estimated cost of the project is Rs. 78,14,981.

The work in connection with the project was started during the year, the expenditure amounting to Rs. 3,60,111, which was mostly incurred on a broad-gauge siding to the headworks and the collection of materials.

# CHAPTER V.—REVENUE AND FINANCE.

## A.—Imperial Revenue and Finance.

422. The revenue for the year from central heads (excluding receipts from *Customs*) amounted to Rs. 9,65,00,000 against Rs. 9,24,00,000 of the previous year. The details are shown in the statement below:—

*Statement of Imperial Revenue and Finance—Receipts.*

| Major heads. | Actuals, 1925-26. | Actuals, 1926-27. | Increase. | Decrease. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. |
| II.—Taxes on Income .. | 5,93,10,711 | 5,88,66,650 | .... | 4,44,061 |
| III.—Salt .. .. | 1,07,430 | 2,27,859 | 1,20,429 | .... |
| IV.—Opium .. .. | 2,98,27,695 | 3,42,65,839 | 44,38,144 | .... |
| X.—Tributes from Indian States .. .. | 74,753 | 67,701 | .... | 7,052 |
| XVI.—Interest .. | 10,24,514 | 10,05,497 | .... | 19,017 |
| XX.—Ports and Pilotage | 15,46,022 | 16,24,823 | 72,801 | .... |
| XXVI.—Miscellaneous Departments .. | 78,046 | 80,331 | 2,285 | .... |
| XXVII.—Currency .. | 23,846 | 15,950 | .... | 7,896 |
| XXX.—Civil Works .. | 1,09,345 | 1,03,114 | .... | 6,231 |
| XXXIII.—Receipts in aid of superannuation .. | 2,80,288 | 1,94,389 | .... | 91,899 |
| XXXV.—Miscellaneous .. | 8,708 | 22,544 | 13,836 | .... |
| XXXIXA.—Miscellaneous adjustments between Central and Provincial Governments .. | 41,734 | .... | .... | 41,734 |
| Total .. | 9,24,39,092 | 9,64,74,697 | 46,53,495 | 6,17,890 |

The main fluctuations are explained as follows:—

*Taxes on Income.*—The decrease is mainly due to smaller assessment on jute, tea and banking concerns.

*Salt.*—The increase is due to an adjustment in the books of the Pay and Account Officer, Customs, of the receipts for the earlier months of 1925-26.

*Opium.*—The increase is chiefly due to larger sales to Far Eastern Governments.

*Ports and Pilotage.*—The increase reflects an improvement in trade.

*Miscellaneous Departments.*—The increase is due to larger receipts under "Examination fees," larger recoveries under "Audit fees" and adjustment of contribution by the Local

Government on account of the Art Section and Art Gallery of the Indian Museum.

The increase or decrease in Central receipts in 1926-27 is shown below: —

*Tribute from Indian States.*—The decrease is due to an instalment for 1924-25 having been credited in 1925-26.

*Interest.*—The decrease is mainly due to the gradual repayment of the loan for the Kidderpore Dock Works.

*Receipts in aid of superannuation.*—The decrease is mainly due to reduced recoveries in the case of pensions under the Provincial Government.

*Miscellaneous.*—The increase is mainly due to larger recoveries of audit fees and to adjustment of contribution by the Local Government on account of the Art Section and Art Gallery of the Indian Museum.

*Miscellaneous adjustments between Central and Provincial Governments.*—There were no adjustments in the year 1926-27.

### *Central Expenditure.*

The following statement shows the Central expenditure in 1926-27, as compared with that of 1925-26: —

| Major heads. | Actuals, 1925-26. | Actuals, 1926-27. | Increase. | Decrease. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. |
| 2.—Taxes on Income .. | 9,52,218 | 9,53,379 | 1,161 | .... |
| 3.—Salt .. .. | 2,23,772 | 2,24,421 | 649 | .... |
| 4.—Opium .. .. | 26,822 | 25,370 | .... | 1,452 |
| 19.—Interest on Ordinary Debt | 15,28,350 | 15,65,381 | 37,031 | .... |
| 20.—Interest on other obligations .. .. | 16,34,668 | 17,17,050 | 82,382 | .... |
| 22.—General Administration—Secretariat Headquarters establishment .. | 41,122 | 40,994 | .... | 128 |
| 23.—Audit .. .. | 6,98,800 | 7,55,362 | 56,562 | .... |
| 24.—Administration of Justice | 46,108 | 36,955 | .... | 9,153 |
| 26.—Police .. .. | 1,16,613 | 75,000 | .... | 41,613 |
| 27.—Ports and Pilotage .. | 20,04,698 | 18,79,217 | .... | 1,25,481 |
| 28.—Ecclesiastical .. | 1,82,443 | 1,90,510 | 8,067 | .... |
| 29.—Political .. .. | 96,739 | 53,543 | .... | 43,196 |
| 30.—Scientific Departments .. | .... | 7,181 | 7,181 | .... |
| 33.—Public Health .. | 88,896 | 1,18,746 | 29,850 | .... |
| 37.—Miscellaneous Departments | 72,258 | 79,303 | 7,045 | .... |
| 41.—Civil Works .. .. | 11,10,760 | 10,84,504 | .... | 26,256 |
| 44.—Territorial and Political Pensions .. .. | 5,80,609 | 6,83,302 | 1,02,693 | .... |
| 45.—Superannuation .. | 16,50,556 | 14,68,273 | .... | 1,82,283 |
| 46.—Stationery and Printing .. | 37,882 | 14,701 | .... | 23,181 |
| 47.—Miscellaneous .. | 1,049 | 75,637 | 74,588 | .... |
| | 11,605 | 4,349 | .... | 7,256 |
| 51A.—Miscellaneous adjustments between Central and Provincial Governments | 41,243 | .... | .... | 41,243 |
| Total . | 1,11,47,211 | 1,10,53,178 | 4,07,209 | 5,01,242 |

The main fluctuations are explained below:—

*Ports and Pilotage.*—The decrease is mainly due to lesser charges in respect of re-conditioning the pilot vessels.

*Political.*—The decrease is due mainly to the absence of arrear claims on account of charges for State prisoners confined in Bengal jails.

*Public Health.*—Pending final decision of Government, all charges on account of the Port Health Departments, Calcutta and Chittagong, were adjusted in the central books for 1926-27. The actuals of 1925-26 represent a moiety only of the charges on this account.

The increase or decrease in Central expenditure in 1926-27 is shown below:—

*Territorial and political pensions.*—The increase is mainly due to payment of arrears and increased pensions to certain members of the Oudh Family.

*Superannuation allowances and pensions.*—The decrease is mainly due to the charges on account of commuted value of pensions to retired officers having been adjusted under a separate head in the books of Accountant-General, Central Revenues.

## Salt.

[Salt Administration Report, 1926-27.]

Salt Credit system.

423. The number of salt dealers who availed themselves of the credit system of payment of duty on salt dropped from 63 to 61. The amount of duty outstanding for adjustment at the end of the year was Rs. 64,19,008 against Rs. 73,98,329 at the close of the previous year.

Imports.

424. The total imports into Calcutta and Chittagong showed a decrease of 11 and 15 per cent., respectively. The importation into Calcutta from Port Said, Spain, and Massowah increased slightly, while Hamburg rose from 628,046 to 12,02,840 maunds. Imports from the United Kingdom fell from 2,720,323 to 1,273,533 maunds. The imports from Bombay showed a marked increase, being 602,018 against 336,366 maunds of the previous year. In Chittagong, the imports from Spain rose from 137,419 to 181,260 maunds.

Consumption and prices.

425. The total quantity of salt which passed into consumption from Calcutta and Chittagong during the year was 133,16,145 maunds against 143,98,321 maunds in the previous

year. The average wholesale price per maund, inclusive of duty, was 3 annas 2 pies higher than in the preceding year.

The average wholesale price per 100 maunds in Calcutta was Rs. 86 against Rs. 68 in the previous year, and in Chittagong Rs. 75 against Rs. 69. The average wholesale price of Liverpool salt per 100 maunds in Calcutta was Rs. 125 against Rs. 69 in the previous year.

### Income-tax.

426. During 1926-27 income-tax work in four districts of the Presidency, viz., Rangpur, Bogra, Khulna and Jessore, was still carried on by the executive officers of this Government. But during the year arrangements were completed by the Commissioner of Income-tax, Bengal, to take over these four districts, with effect from 1st April 1927, and income-tax administration throughout the Presidency is now under the direct control of the Central Board of Revenue.

The year 1925-26, the income of which formed the basis of assessment made in 1926-27, can only be regarded as moderately satisfactory. The piece-goods market was dull throughout. Violent fluctuations of prices in the jute market led to reduced profits of jute companies. Shellac was depressed and coal hardly reached convalescence. Engineering also did badly and tea was dull. On the other hand, the motor vehicle trade experienced a year of healthy growth. Political agitation had no effect on the working of the department and there was no important economic or other influence affecting the revenue of the year.

The table below gives the figures of assessed income of 1926-27, compared with those of the previous year:—

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| Standard figure, *i.e.*, assessed income in 1920-21, as modified up to 31st March 1927 .. .. .. | 62,38,00,958 |
| Assessed income— | |
| In 1921-22 .. .. .. | (Not available). |
| In 1922-23 .. .. .. | 47,53,18,672 |
| In 1923-24 .. .. .. | 49,21,45,843 |
| In 1924-25 .. .. .. | 46,65,74,333 |
| In 1925-26 .. .. .. | 50,63,56,689 |
| In 1926-27 .. .. .. | 49,40,92,344 |

As in previous years, Bengal did not benefit from Devolution Rule 15.

In 1926-27 the collections of income-tax amounted to 3,08 lakhs and of super-tax to 2,47 lakhs, as compared with 3,26 lakhs

and 2,46 lakhs, respectively, in 1925-26. Other statistics will be found in the returns submitted by the Commissioner of Income-tax, Bengal, to the Central Board of Revenue.

## B.—Revenue and Finance other than Central—Provincial Finance.

*Statement of Provincial Receipts—Actuals.*

427. The following statement shows the revenue collected in Bengal during 1926-27, as compared with that of 1925-26:—

*Receipts.*

| Major heads. | Actuals, 1925-26. | Actuals, 1926-27. |
|---|---|---|
| | Rs. | Rs. |
| V.—Land Revenue .. .. | 3,00,57,344 | 3,11,20,178 |
| VI.—Excise .. .. .. | 2,28,02,451 | 2,25,17,132 |
| VII.—Stamps .. .. .. | 3,57,98,109 | 3,31,60,071 |
| VIII.—Forest .. .. .. | 28,56,420 | 31,57,957 |
| IX.—Registration .. .. | 38,92,052 | 38,49,866 |
| IXA.—Scheduled Taxes .. .. | 19,81,292 | 16,90,535 |
| XII.—Subsidised Companies .. .. | 81,558 | 1,24,447 |
| XIII.—Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works for which capital accounts are kept (net) .. | 2,09,298 | 1,31,966 |
| XIV.—Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works for which no capital accounts are kept .. | 2,50,075 | 2,20,559 |
| XVI.—Interest .. .. .. | 3,18,879 | 3,24,370 |
| XVII.—Administration of Justice .. | 14,40,610 | 14,48,650 |
| XVIII.—Jails and Convict Settlements .. | 10,70,475 | 11,70,497 |
| XIX.—Police .. .. .. | 7,35,693 | 5,83,285 |
| XX.—Ports and Pilotage .. .. | 19,364 | 42,391 |
| XXI.—Education .. .. .. | 12,13,109 | 12,60,933 |
| XXII.—Medical .. .. .. | 7,98,759 | 8,56,674 |
| XXIII.—Public Health .. .. | 45,086 | 97,005 |
| XXIV.—Agriculture .. .. .. | 2,16,096 | 3,55,112 |
| XXV.—Industries .. .. .. | 6,82,169 | 5,14,890 |
| XXVI.—Miscellaneous Departments .. | 23,921 | 19,618 |
| XXX.—Civil Works .. .. | 5,82,195 | 5,67,182 |
| XXXIII.—Receipts in aid of Superannuation .. | 7,39,502 | 9,17,971 |
| XXXIV.—Stationary and Printing .. | 2,71,501 | 1,72,768 |
| XXXV.—Miscellaneous .. .. | 13,51,447 | 9,22,398 |
| XXXIXA.—Miscellaneous adjustments between the Central and Provincial Governments .. .. .. | 41,243 | .... |
| Total .. | 10,70,60,052 | 10,49,62,523 |
| Loans and Advances by the Bengal Government | 8,18,197 | 7,51,972 |
| Advances from the Provincial Loan Funds .. | 23,50,000 | 7,50,000 |
| Famine Insurance Fund .. .. | 2,36,052 | .... |
| Total .. | 11,04,64,301 | 10,64,64,495 |

The principal variations under Provincial Receipts are explained as follows:—

*Land Revenue.*—The increase is due to changes in the dates of certain *kists* in the Burdwan district, in consequence of which the latest dates of payment of revenue amounting approximately to Rs. 11 lakhs fell in June 1927 instead of in March 1926.

*Excise.*—The fall may be attributed to two causes, viz.—(1) communal disturbances in the "Calcutta" area, and (2) general depression in the coal trade.

*Stamps.*—The heavy fall in the price of jute, general depression in trade and communal riots were responsible for the very heavy drop under this head.

*Forests.*—The increase is due partly to the extension of departmental operations and partly to the increase in demand for forest produce.

*Registration.*—The small difference may be regarded as a normal fluctuation.

*Scheduled Taxes.*—The fall is more apparent than real, as the receipts from the betting tax, which should have been credited in March 1927, were actually credited in April 1927 and could not be entered in the accounts for 1926-27.

*Subsidized Companies.*—The increase is due to larger profit accruing from the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway.

*Jails and Convict Settlements.*—The increased demand for jail-made articles resulted in an increase of about Rs. 1 lakh, which would have been larger but for the transfer of the credit of the sale-proceeds of quinine tablets, to the head XXV—Industries from the middle of the year.

*Police.*—The decrease is really due to a decision that recoveries from other Governments on account of service payments should be taken as a set-off against expenditure, if recovered within the year to which the expenditure relates.

*Ports and Pilotage.*—The increase is due to the raising of survey fees for vessels, which form the chief source of revenue under this head.

*Education.*—The increase may be attributed to the opening of the Islamia College from the 1st July 1926, and the enhancement of fee rates in the Presidency College, Bengal Engineering College, and other institutions.

*Medical.*—The increase is mainly accounted for by larger recoveries from other Governments on account of educational facilities rendered to medical students of other provinces.

*Public Health.*—The increase was the result of refunds by District Boards of unspent balances of grants made to them for anti-malarial measures in the previous year, supplemented by recoveries from the Port Commissioners and the Central Government on account of the share of the cost of the Port Health Department, Calcutta.

*Agriculture.*—The increase was mainly under "Veterinary receipts,", which included arrears recoverable from other provinces for educational facilities afforded to students from those provinces and partly also to recoveries of the outstanding balances of the cost of sera supplied to local bodies.

*Industries.*—The principal item of receipts under this head is the sale-proceeds of quinine and the fall in revenue is due to a reduction in the sale price.

*Receipts in aid of Superannuation.*—The very large increase is solely due to larger recoveries from other Governments on account of the commuted value of pensions paid to pensioners of those provinces.

*Stationery and Printing.*—The decrease is mainly due to smaller recoveries on account of supply of forms to other Governments from provincial presses.

*Miscellaneous.*—The most fluctuating receipts under this head are "Recoveries of service payments" and "Refunds" and the decrease occurred under these two heads.

*Statement of Provincial expenditure—Actuals.*

428. The following statement shows the charges on account of provincial services for 1926-27, as compared with those for 1925-26:—

| Major heads. | Actuals, 1925-26. | Actuals, 1926-27. |
|---|---|---|
| | Rs. | Rs. |
| 5.—Land Revenue .. .. .. | 35,76,370 | 38,56,326 |
| 6.—Excise .. .. .. | 26,07,189 | 24,92,961 |
| 7.—Stamps .. .. .. | 8,67,988 | 4,96,413 |
| 8.—Forests .. .. .. | 12,60,970 | 14,14,706 |
| 8A.—Forest capital outlay charged to Revenue | 43,257 | .... |
| 9.—Registration .. .. .. | 18,73,391 | 18,75,964 |
| 9A.—Scheduled Taxes .. .. | 15,000 | 15,000 |
| 14.—Interest on works for which capital accounts are kept .. .. | 18,76,230 | 19,04,273 |
| 15.—Other Revenue expenditure financed from ordinary Revenue .. .. | 15,64,904 | 15,99,013 |
| 15 (1).—Other Revenue expenditure financed from Famine Insurance grants .. | .... | .... |

| Major heads. | Actuals, 1925 26. | Actuals, 1926-27. |
|---|---|---|
| 16.—Construction of Irrigation, Navigation and Drainage Works— | | |
| A.—Financed from Famine Insurance grants .. .. .. | .... | .... |
| B.—Financed from ordinary Revenue | —3,46,110 | 11,445 |
| 19.—Interest on ordinary debt .. .. | —8,47,724 | —7,80,828 |
| 20.—Interest on other obligations .. | .... | 3,560 |
| 22.—General Administration .. .. | 1,15,30,177 | 1,17,41,664 |
| 24.—Administration of Justice .. .. | 1,08,58,020 | 1,08,29,709 |
| 25.—Jails and convict Settlements .. | 31,04,640 | 32,18,065 |
| 26.—Police .. .. .. | 1,79,44,853 | 1,87,10,420 |
| 27.—Ports and Pilotage .. .. | 6,20,993 | 6,73,597 |
| 30.—Scientific Department .. .. | 25,920 | 57,020 |
| 31.—Education .. .. .. | 1,31,72,599 | 1,35,63,166 |
| 32.—Medical .. .. .. | 56,78,214 | 56,35,864 |
| 33.—Public Health .. .. .. | 23,84,755 | 33,46,384 |
| 34.—Agriculture .. .. .. | 19,49,564 | 21,61,457 |
| 35.—Industries .. .. .. | 11,24,148 | 11,21,968 |
| 37.—Miscellaneous Departments .. .. | 2,27,561 | 2,46,903 |
| 41.—Civil Works .. .. .. | 1,10,43,398 | 1,11,70,400 |
| 43.—Famine Relief and Insurance .. | 2,00,000 | 2,00,000 |
| 45.—Superannuation Allowances and Pensions | 60,19,926 | 55,45,781 |
| 46.—Stationery and Printing .. .. | 16,40,779 | 17,59,429 |
| 47.—Miscellaneous .. .. .. | 2,87,051 | 4,46,551 |
| 51A.—Miscellaneous adjustments .. .. | 41,734 | .... |
| 52.—Extraordinary payments .. .. | .... | .... |
| 52A.—Forest capital outlay not charged to Revenue .. .. .. | .... | 3,22,682 |
| Expenditure in England .. .. | 27,60,701 | 27,73,330 |
| 55.—Irrigation and other capital outlay not charged to Revenue .. .. | —1,82,640 | 3,32,055 |
| 60.—Civil Works not charged to Revenue .. | 7,47,427 | 6,95,797 |
| 60B.—Commuted value of Pensions .. | .... | 12,39,686 |
| Total .. | 10,36,71,285 | 10,86,80,761 |
| Loans and advances by the Bengal Government | 18,64,410 | 7,09,871 |
| Repayment of advances from Provincial Loans Fund .. .. .. .. | 4,93,142 | 5,28,376 |
| Total .. | 10,60,28,837 | 10,99,19,008 |

The principal variations under Receipts are explained as follows:—

*Land Revenue.*—The increase is chiefly due to larger expenditure on agricultural and other improvements in Government estates and in survey and settlement operations.

*Excise.*—The decrease occurred mainly under "Cost price of opium supplied to the Excise Department," partly due to the reduction of Rs. 2 per seer made by the Government of India in the factory price of opium and partly to the fact that the actuals of 1925-26 included cost of opium held in stock in the treasuries on 31st March 1925.

*Stamps.*—The final figures are not yet ready. There will probably be no difference when all the adjustments are made.

*Forests.*—The increase was mainly due to larger expenditure on extraction of timber, and other produce and is reflected in the increased receipts under "VIII—Forest," indicating more activity in the department.

*Forest.*—The increase is due to larger outlay on communications and buildings and organisation, and improvement and extension of forests.

*Irrigation.*—The increase was mainly due to the actuals for 1925-26 having included as special receipts the prices of canal lands sold to the Improvement Trust, which were taken in reduction of expenditure under this head.

*Interest on ordinary Debt.*—The increase was mainly due to interest charged on a loan taken in 1925-26.

*General Administration.*—Expenditure in connection with elections for Central and Provincial Legislatures was the chief factor of increase, apart from normal increase due to increments of pay of officers and staff.

*Jails.*—Increased dietary charges in Central Jails, larger expenditure for the purchase of raw materials in the Presidency and Central Jails, and improvement of the pay and prospects of the Jailors and Assistant Jailors effected during the latter part of 1925-26 account for the increase under this major head.

*Police.*—The very large increase is due partly to the large expenditure incurred in connection with the communal riots in Calcutta, and partly to the additional new expenditure (recurring and non-recurring) on account of house rent of subordinate police officers entitled to free quarters, revision of scale of increment to Sub-Inspectors and purchase of furniture and equipment for constables. Besides these, there was the usual normal increase for increments in pay of the whole staff.

*Education.*—Increased grant to the Calcutta University for the erection of a third storey on the Ashutosh Building and payments of larger grants-in-aid to non-Government arts colleges and secondary primary schools, reorganisation of the Presidency College and strengthening of some of the Government colleges and larger building grants to non-Government institutions mainly account for the increase under the head.

*Public Health.*—The increase was entirely due to larger expenditure under "Grants for public health purposes", and to the undertaking of a more vigorous campaign of anti-malaria and anti-kala-azar operations.

*Agriculture.*—Purchase of larger quantities of serum for supply to local bodies consequent on the serious outbreak of rinderpest, larger outlay on experimental farms and increased expenditure under " Co-operative Credit," due to the expansion of the movement, mainly account for the increase under this head.

*Civil Works.*—The increase under this head is mainly attributable to the purchase of the site and buildings of the Army Clothing Storage Depôt from the Government of India.

*Superannuation.*—The decrease is mainly due to smaller commuted value of pensions paid to other Governments and to a change in the classification of this expenditure whereby such charges are now adjusted under the new major head " J. J.—Commuted value of pensions not charged to Revenue."

*Stationery and Printing.*—The increased cost of stationery supplied from Central Stores accounts for the increase.

*Miscellaneous.*—The adjustment of cost of passages granted under Superior Civil Services Rules, 1924, is mainly responsible for the increase under this head.

*Irrigation.*—The increase represents practically the charges on account of the construction of the Damodar Canal, which project was taken up in 1926-27.

## Stamps.

[Annual statistics of the Stamp Department for the year 1926-27.]

Revenue and charges.

429. The total receipts under the Stamp and Court-fees Acts during the year 1926-27, amounted to Rs. 3,40,33,282, showing a decrease of Rs. 26,85,361 or 7·3 per cent. on those of 1925-26. The decrease occurred under both judicial and non-judicial stamps. The charges during the year were Rs. 12,61,360 against Rs. 8,67,351 in thee previous year. The increase is only apparent, being more than accounted for by the inclusion under " Charges " of refunds made to the Calcutta Improvement Trust in respect of stamp duty collected on behalf of that body, a course not followed in previous years.

Judicial stamps.

430. The sale-proceeds of court-fee stamps (excluding stamps for copies) fell from Rs. 2,16,73,138 in 1925-26 to Rs. 1,99,06,496 in 1926-27. Decreases occurred in all districts, except Bankura, Bakarganj and Rangpur. The most marked decrease (Rs. 12,13,489) occurred in Calcutta, and is mainly attributed to the fact that no important wills or large estates came under letters of administration during the year.

Non-judicial stamps.

431. The revenue derived from the sale of non-judicial stamps fell from Rs. 1,37,91,619 to Rs. 1,29,04,536, showing a decrease of Rs. 8,87,083, which was shared by all districts, except Murshidabad, Chittagong and Dinajpur. The most marked decrease was again in Calcutta (Rs. 2,09,573), where receipts fell considerably under "Impressed Stamps," as defined in section 2 (*13*) (*a*) of the Stamp Act, and "Hundis" or "Inland Bills of Exchange." The decline in the mufassal is attributed variously to a contraction in money-lending consequent on the low price of jute, to an increase of co-operative societies and banking institutions, and (in Dacca, Mymensingh and Faridpur) to a fall in the number of money-suits owing to the establishment of new union courts.

Sale of stamps.

432. The number of vendors holding licenses to sell stamps fell from 5,439 to 5,377, and the amount of discount allowed to them fell from Rs. 4,78,593 to Rs. 4,43,991.

Deficient duty.

433. The total number of cases in which deficient duty and penalty were levied by the Civil Courts under section 35 of Act II of 1899 rose from 1,309 to 1,371. The amount of duty and penalty realised in these cases was Rs. 12,385 against Rs. 14,488 in 1925-26. The number of cases decided by Revenue Courts under sections 32, 37, 40 and 41 of the Act fell from 4,750 to 4,161, but the amount of penalty realised increased from Rs. 97,308 to Rs. 1,60,223.

Prosecutions under the Stamp Act.

434. The number of cases instituted for infringement of the provisions of the Stamp Act was 145 against 253 in 1925-26. Of the 163 persons brought to trial, 144 were convicted; the figures for the previous year being 98 and 90, respectively. The fines imposed rose from Rs. 1,063 to Rs. 3,138, and the rewards paid to informers increased from Rs. 441 to Rs. 1,770.

Working of section 19-H of the Court-fees Act.

435. Of the cases of valuation of estates for issue of probate and letters of administration reported during 1926-27, including those pending at the beginning of the year, 64·6 per cent. were completely enquired into against 72·6 per cent. in the preceding year. The proportion borne by the deficit duty required to the amount originally realised was 17·4 per cent. against 26·1 per cent. in the previous year.

## Excise.

[Report on the Administration of the Excise Department in Bengal, 1926-27. Statistics of British India Part IV (*b*)—Finance and Revenue Accounts.]

Excise Licensing Boards and Advisory Committees.

436. The Licensing Boards constituted for the municipalities of Calcutta, Howrah and Bally continued to function in respect of the number and location of shops for the retail sale of excisable articles and opium. New Licensing Boards were established as

an experimental measure in the districts of 24-Parganas, Dacca, Rangpur and Chittagong to decide the number and location of excise and opium shops therein. The Boards worked satisfactorily and their powers were exercised with discretion and Government acted on their decisions. In areas outside the above districts, the recommendations of the Local Advisory Committees were carefully considered and most of them were accepted.

**Revenue.**

437. The total excise revenue amounted to Rs. 2,25,55,658 against Rs. 2,28,44,009 in the previous year, showing a decrease of Rs. 2,88,351. The heads which showed a decrease were *Country spirit* (Rs. 568,107), due to the closure of shops in Calcutta on account of the communal riots during April, May and June 1926, and also to their subsequent closure on certain public holidays as a precautionary measure; *Pachwai* (Rs. 1,92,555), due to the prevailing higher rate of the price of rice in the districts of Burdwan, Birbhum and Bankura and to the slump in the coal trade in the district of Burdwan; and *Tari* (Rs. 50,440). Against this there was increase of Rs. 4,17,138 under *Hemp Drugs*, Rs. 1,85,665 under *Opium*, Rs. 44,516 under *Receipts from Commercial Spirits* and Rs. 17,882 under *Receipts under Miscellaneous*. The incidence of excise revenue per head of population was 7 annas 8 pies against 7 annas 9 pies in the previous year.

**Country spirit.**

438. The number of shops decreased by 10 and the consumption by 4,389 L. P. gallons. Consumption increased in 16 districts and decreased in 11 districts. The increase was considerable in the district of Jalpaiguri, due to the same reason as in the previous year, while Calcutta and most of the districts of the Burdwan Division showed an appreciable decrease for the reasons already stated. Consumption increased in many of the districts in North and East Bengal, owing to the influx of up-country-men in connection with jute and other business and a general increase in the wages of the labouring classes in business centres.

***Tari.***

439. The tree-tax system continued to work well in the districts of Howrah and Hooghly. The system was extended to the district of Calcutta and to a major portion of the 24-Parganas district. The total number of fermented *tari* licenses decreased from 543 to 537 and the total receipts from Rs. 8,84,892 to Rs. 8,34,452.

***Pachwai.***

440. The total number of *pachwai* licenses issued was 54,952 as compared with 37,326 in 1925-26. The revenue from retail license fees decreased from Rs. 12,14,396 to Rs. 10,05,382. The

decrease was considerable in Burdwan, Bankura and Birbhum. The revenue from home-brewing licenses increased from Rs. 57,870 to Rs. 74,329.

441. The total number of licenses issued for "trade" and "public" vend of potable foreign liquor, exclusive of licenses for the retail sale of medicated wines and commercial spirits was 1,582 against 1,623 in the preceding year. The total receipts from license fees increased from Rs. 2,95,784 to Rs. 3,09,946. The receipts from duty amounted to Rs. 5,90,177 against Rs. 7,53,882 in the previous year, the decrease being due to the preference for cheap imported brandy and whisky instead of the locally manufactured article. Foreign liquor.

442. The total number of licenses issued for the retail sale of *ganja* was 1,218 against 1,215 in 1925-26. The total receipts amounted to Rs. 47,67,560 against Rs. 43,60,085 in the previous year, the net increase being Rs. 4,07,475. The total quantity of *ganja* consumed amounted to 1,692 maunds against 1,787 maunds in 1925-26. The consumption decreased in 20 districts and increased in 7 districts. The sole reason for the decrease in consumption was the increase in retail price from Rs. 87-8 to Rs. 97-8 per seer, with effect from the 1st April 1926. The total taxation was Rs. 68·7 per seer as compared with Rs. 58·7 in the previous year. *Ganja.*

443. The total consumption of *bhang* amounted to 407 maunds, as compared with 437 maunds in the previous year. The total revenue from license fees and duty amounted to Rs. 1,85,310, as compared with Rs. 2,12,745 in 1925-26, showing a decrease of Rs. 27,435. *Bhang.*

444. The total number of retail licenses was 34 against 35 in the previous year and the total revenue amounted to Rs. 3,03,105, as compared with Rs. 2,66,007 in the previous year. *Charas.*

445. The total number of licenses issued for the retail sale of opium was 861, the same as in the previous year. The quantity of opium consumed fell from 998 maunds to 994 maunds. The consumption showed a decrease in Calcutta, the 24-Parganas, Hooghly, Howrah and three other districts, while it increased in the rest of the Presidency, but not excessively in any one district. The total receipts amounted to Rs. 48,15,300, as compared with Rs. 46,29,635 in 1925-26, the increase of Rs. 1,85,665 being due to the enhancement of duty on opium in the districts of Calcutta, the 24-Parganas, Hooghly and Howrah. *Opium.*

446. The total number of licenses issued to chemists and druggists for the sale of cocaine was 420, as compared with 391 Cocaine.

in 1925-26. Seventy-five permits for the possession of cocaine were issued free to managers of hospitals or dispensaries not under Government supervision and 48 permits to qualified medical practitioners and dentists. The total number of arrests for illicit possession of cocaine was 393 against 441 in the previous year. The illicit trade in cocaine continued during the year under report. In Calcutta 614 oz. of cocaine were seized by Customs officers, 76½ oz. by Excise officers and 10½ oz. by Police officers, as compared with 1,500 oz. 492 oz. and 20 oz., respectively, in the previous year. The total quantity seized in Bengal was 701 oz., as compared with 2,023 oz. in 1925-26.

**Excise offences.**

447. The total number of persons prosecuted on charges under the Excise and Opium laws was 6,134, and of persons convicted, 5,546, as compared with 6,282 and 5,889 respectively, in the previous year.

## Roads and Public Works Cesses.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1926-27.]

**Rate.**

448. Except in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, where the Cess Act is not in force, the road and public works cesses continued to be levied at the maximum rate of one anna in the rupee on the valuation of lands and annual net profits of mines and other immovable properties.

**Demands and collections.**

449. The valuation or gross rental on which the cesses are based amounted to Rs. 14,70,69,536 against the current land revenue demand of the same area of Rs. 2,90,96,302. The proportion of land revenue to rental works out at 19·8 per cent. The total cess demand was Rs. 96,87,653. The current demand showed a net decrease of Rs. 1,35,975, as compared with that of the preceding year, contributed mainly by the district of Burdwan, where there was a falling off of Rs. 2,80,754, owing to the transfer of some collieries to the district of Manbhum in the province of Bihar and Orissa and to the cancellation of the assessment wrongly made on the Kulti Iron Works and to the general slump in the coal trade. There were, however, notable increases in the cess demand in the districts of Jessore, Bankura and Nadia, owing to the cess revaluation in those districts. The percentage of total collections on current demand rose from 97·45 in the preceding year to 98·82 and that of the outstanding balance on the total demand fell from 15·4 in the preceding year to 13·9 in the year under report. In the districts of Burdwan, Bakarganj, Tippera, Rangpur, the 24-Parganas, Jalpaiguri,

Dacca and Malda, however, the percentage of total collections on current demand exceeded the standard of 100 per cent. The percentage varied from 87·79 to 99·65 in the remaining districts of the Presidency.

Working of the certificate procedure.

450. The total number of certificates filed for the recovery of arrears of cesses was 39,705 against 41,770 in the preceding year. The total number of certificates for disposal, including 14,971 of the previous year, amounted to 54,676, of which 40,512 were disposed of and 14,164 left pending at the close of the year. In the majority of cases arrears of cesses were recovered on the mere issue of notices of demand, on the issue of notices for the attachment of property or on the issue of distress warrants, warrants of arrest and proclamation of sale. Recourse to actual sale had to be taken only in 668 cases.

Valuation and revaluation.

451. General revaluation operations on a large scale were in progress in the districts of Bankura, Hooghly, Howrah, Nadia, Jessore, Noakhali, Rangpur, Malda and Darjeeling. During the year under report operations were brought to a close in the districts of Bankura, Jessore and Malda. The assessment of coal-mines in the districts of Burdwan and Birbhum and of certain *gazari* forests in Dacca and Mymensingh was, as in previous years, revised under Chapter V of the Cess Act. Partial valuations and revaluations were also undertaken in the districts of Burdwan, Midnapore, the 24-Parganas, Faridpur, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Jalpaiguri.

# CHAPTER VI—VITAL STATISTICS AND MEDICAL SERVICE.

## Vital Statistics.

[Report of the Director of Public Health, Bengal, for the year 1926.]

**Climatic conditions.**

452. The total rainfall of the season from May to October was 34·4 per cent. below normal in the Dacca and Chittagong Divisions, respectively, while it was in excess in the Burdwan, Presidency and the Rajshahi Divisions by 13, 18 and 4 per cent. respectively.

**Vital statistics General.**

453. Among the ten provinces of India, Bengal stood tenth on the list as regards birth-rate and seventh as regards death-rate. Judged by the rate of natural increase, as shown by the excess of births over deaths, it was tenth on the list.

**Birth-rate.**

454. The total number of births recorded during the year was 1,276,380, giving a birth-rate of 27·4 per mille which was 7·4 per cent. less than that of the previous year and 5·2 per cent. less than the quinquennial average. The highest birth-rate 41·8 was recorded in Birbhum and the lowest in Calcutta, 16·8. One hundred and eight males were born to every hundred females. Compared with the mean of the past ten years the birth-rate showed a decrease in all except the Burdwan Division. Nine districts especially Birbhum and Bankura recorded birth-rates in excess of the decennial mean.

455. During the year, 1,151,197 deaths were recorded giving a death-rate of 24·7 per mille which was ·8 per cent. less than that of the previous year and 6·1 per cent. less than the quinquennial average. The highest death-rate 34·7 was recorded in Calcutta and the lowest 17·3 in Tippera. Compared with the average death-rate of the past ten years, there was improvement in every district except Calcutta and Howrah, the greatest advance being made in Darjeeling, Nadia, Birbhum and Murshidabad.

**Mortality according to sex.**

456. A total of 603,602 males and 547,595 females died during the year giving a death-rate of 25·1 and 24·4 per mille respectively and a ratio of 110 males to every 100 females. The male death-rate exceeded the female death-rate in all districts except Hooghly, Howrah, 24-Parganas and Calcutta.

**Maternal deaths.**

457. A total of 3,228 deaths occurred during the year among females within 14 days of their labour as compared with 2,790 in the previous year.

458. During the year, 35·6 per cent. of the total deaths occurred among children below 5 years of age and 17·9 per cent. in persons above 50, the remaining 46·5 per cent. being distributed among persons between the age of 5 and 50 years. Mortality according to age.

459. As in the previous year, the death-rate among Musalmans was higher than that of the Hindus in the Burdwan, Presidency and the Rajshahi Divisions, while it was lower in the Dacca and Chittagong Divisions. Compared with the previous year, there was an increase of mortality among Christians and Hindus and a reduction among Musalmans, Buddhists and other classes, the greatest reduction being in the last named. Mortality according to class.

460. There were 251,184 infant deaths, giving a death-rate of 196·8 per 1,000 births and showing an increase of 8·6 per cent. One hundred and fifteen male infants died to every 100 female infants. The proportion borne by infant deaths to the total mortality was 21·8 per cent. The highest death-rate occurred in Calcutta, both for males and females, and the lowest in Tippera in respect of males and in Khulna in respect of females. Infant mortality.

461. The excess of births over deaths was 125,183, giving a natural increase of 2·7 per mille of population. Nine districts, Jessore, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Nadia, Dinajpur, Pabna, Howrah, 24-Parganas and Calcutta reported an excess of deaths over births. Excess of births over deaths.

462. The number of deaths from cholera was 59,106, an increase of 85·7 per cent. over that of the previous year. The percentage of cholera mortality to total mortality was 5·1 against 2·9 during the previous year. As in the previous year, Chittagong showed the highest mortality followed by the Dacca and Presidency Divisions. Among districts the highest mortality was recorded in the 24-Parganas, 3·4 per mille. In only twelve districts did the death-rate show an increase over the decennial mean. Cholera.

463. During the year, small-pox claimed 25,548 victims, an increase of 25 per cent. on the previous year and 66·6 per cent. over the decennial mean. As in the previous year, the death-rate was highest in the Burdwan Division, 1·00 per mille and lowest in the Dacca Division, ·16 per mille. Among districts, Pabna and Murshidabad recorded the highest death-rate, 2·32 and 2·15 per mille respectively, and Darjeeling the lowest, ·007 per mille. Small-pox.

464. No death from plague was reported during the year. Plague.

465. During the year, 822,774 deaths occurred from fever, of which 458,198 were due to malaria, 5,368 to enteric, 3,075 to relapsing fever, 1,432 to measles, 14,275 to kala-azar and the remaining 340,426 to other fevers. The death-rate from fever was 17·7 per Fever.

mille and it represented 71·5 per cent. of the total mortality, malaria alone accounting for 9·8 per mille and 55·7 per cent. of the total mortality.

Malaria.

466. Deaths from malaria showed a decrease of 8·4 per cent., as compared with the previous year the improvement being mostly in the Rajshahi, Dacca and Chittagong Divisions. Judging from the fever index, Burdwan, Nadia, and Murshidabad, as in the previous year, were the worst sufferers and Calcutta, Bakarganj, Dacca and Tippera were least affected.

Kala-azar.

467. A total of 14,275 deaths was reported from kala-azar, giving a death-rate of ·31 per mille. During the year, kala-azar showed a slight decrease all round, the reduction in the provincial rate being 13·9 per cent. Among towns the highest rate of mortality was recorded in Jamalpur. Thirty-four towns recorded no deaths from this cause.

Respiratory diseases.

468. There were 30,589 deaths reported from respiratory diseases, of which 1,817 were due to influenza, 12,294 to pneumonia, 7,032 to phthisis and 9,446 to other respiratory diseases. The death-rate from this cause was ·66 per mille, representing 2·66 per cent. of the total mortality. Influenza accounted for 5·9 per cent., pneumonia 4·2 per cent. and phthisis 22·9 per cent. of the total deaths under this head.

Dysentery and diarrhœa.

469. There were 24,978 deaths reported from dysentery and diarrhœa giving a death-rate of ·54 per mille.

Injuries.

470. Deaths from injuries amounted to 19,970, including 3,227 from suicides, 11,535 from wounds or accidents, 4,859 from snake-bites and attacks of wild animals and 349 from rabies.

Income and expenditure of local authorities.

471. The average expenditure on sanitation per head of population in municipalities excluding Calcutta was Re. 1-15-8 as compared with Rs. 2-0-11 during the preceding year. The average income of District Boards per head was 4 annas 9 pies, of which 16·1 per cent. or 9 pies per head was spent on medical relief, sanitation and vaccination.

## Emigration.

### Inland Emigration.

[Report on Inland Emigration under the Assam Labour and Emigration Act, 1901 (VI of 1901) for the year ending the 30th June 1927.]

472. There was a noticeable increase in the number of emigrants despatched to the labour districts during the year under review as compared with the previous year.

Recruiting operations in Bengal were conducted as usual in the districts of Bankura, Birbhum, Burdwan and Midnapore. The number of garden sardars employed during the year was 340 as against 512 in the preceding year. All worked under the supervision of licensed local agents. The number of local agents' licenses was 13 as against 27 issued in the previous year. The total number of emigrants recruited in Bengal was 147 against 816 in the preceding year. The largest number of recruits was from Midnapore, *viz.*, 84. The total number of recruits from Bengal and other provinces embarking at Goalundo was 11,212 (including those recruited in the Bombay Presidency outside the Act) as compared with 9,426 in the preceding year.

The rest house for emigrants at Goalundo maintained by the Tea Districts Labour Association was duly inspected and found to be in good order. Arrangements for river transport were satisfactory. Three deaths were reported to have occurred among the emigrants at the bathing station at Kharagpur, but there was no death at the other two bathing places at Asansol and Naihati. Of the 11,074 emigrants who arrived at Goalundo from the recruiting districts in and outside the Presidency of Bengal, 2 deserted and one was released. As in the preceding year, there was no case of death or desertion amongst the emigrants during their journey by steamer from Goalundo or by railway from Chandpur to their final destination.

In connection with the transport of labour to Assam receipts amounted to Rs. 565 as against Rs. 650 in the preceding year, while the expenditure increased from Rs. 12,352-5 to Rs. 17,777-7-6.

473. There was no emigration of skilled or unskilled labour from this Presidency to countries overseas during the year under report. Foreign Emigration.

## Medical Relief.

### Calcutta Hospitals and Dispensaries.

[Report on the working of Hospitals and Dispensaries in Bengal for the year 1926.]

474. Thirty-two hospitals and dispensaries were in operation at the beginning of the year and one private non-aided institution was added during the year. Nineteen of these had in-door accommodation, and the total number of beds was 3,145. Number of institutions.

475. The total number of patients treated was 553,521 as compared with 540,199 in the previous year. Attendance and admissions.

Nursing.

476. The number of nurses employed in the more important hospitals rose from 422 to 454.

Diseases.

477. The incidence of disease as shown by the attendance registers was heaviest under the head malaria, the number of patients treated rising from 47,589 to 49,893. Venereal diseases claimed the next largest number of patients, *viz.*, 21,625. The number of kala-azar patients (9,947) declined by 1,281, but that of patients suffering from influenza rose from 9,792 to 10,207. A severe outbreak of cholera broke out in Calcutta towards the middle of January 1926 and continued unabated for the next three months. The total number of cholera patients treated was 1,915 against 1,063 in the previous year. The attendance of patients suffering from tuberculosis (4,117) was greater than in the previous year by 213.

Finance.

478. The total receipts of Class I, III and IV institutions fell from Rs. 32,32,193 to Rs. 30,67,376. Government contributions amounted to Rs. 18,95,645 or nearly 62 per cent. of the total receipts. Contributions from municipal and local funds were Rs. 4,69,432, and a sum of Rs. 1,96,863 was realised from subscriptions and donations. The income from paying patients was Rs. 3,29,323 as against Rs. 2,90,483 in the previous year. The total expenditure for the maintenance of the Calcutta hospitals was Rs. 28,92,244 against Rs. 28,97,603 in the previous year.

## District Hospitals and Dispensaries.

Number of institutions.

479. During the year 40 new dispensaries were opened, of which 18 were established by District Boards and 11 by Union Boards. Medical relief was also afforded to 117,918 persons in temporary dispensaries and treatment centres opened by local bodies. There were also 3 Unani, 11 Ayurvedic and 43 Homeopathic dispensaries in operation.

Number of patients.

480. The number of patients treated in allopathic dispensaries was 7,788,457 as compared with 7,625,421 in 1925. In Homeopathic, Ayurvedic and Unani dispensaries the number was 241,285, 33,190 and 6,074 respectively.

Diseases.

481. The disease for which the largest number of patients were treated was malaria, *viz.*, 2,115,764 as against 2,271,203. Influenza patients numbered 68,753 and those suffering from kala-azar 104,648 against 65,082 and 120,679 respectively in the previous year. The number of cholera patients rose from 7,169 to 11,380; the number of those suffering from tuberculosis of the lung and from small-pox also showed increases of 970 and 98 respectively.

482. The actual receipts of Class I, III and IV hospitals and dispensaries amounted to Rs. 22,71,701 and the cost of maintenance to Rs. 21,53,759, the corresponding figures for the previous year being Rs. 21,39,261 and Rs. 20,94,373. Of the total receipts, contributions from Government amounted to Rs. 3,48,580 and those from local funds to Rs. 10,69,364. Public subscriptions and donations rose from Rs. 3,15,805 to Rs. 3,94,124. Finance.

483. The year under report was marked by a steady increase in the number of dispensaries, the District and Union Boards playing a conspicuous part in this development. The financial condition of mufassal dispensaries continued to be unsatisfactory and in order to supplement their resources many dispensaries were compelled to make a small charge for medicines supplied to patients. General.

## Eden Sanitarium, Darjeeling.

[Report of the Eden Sanitarium and Hospital for 1926.]

484. The Eden Sanitarium and Eden Hospital were founded for the benefit of Europeans residing in the Lower Provinces and elsewhere, who are unable to obtain in their homes the care and attention which they require when overtaken by sickness or accident. General.

485. During the year the Sanitarium remained open from the 1st April to the 15th November 1926. There was a heavy increase in the number of admissions from 398 to 510, which was due to the reduction of charges. The total number of patients treated in the hospital was 140, of whom 137 were cured and 3 died. Number of patients.

486. No special grant from Government was required by the institution beyond the usual grant of Rs. 1,500 for the maintenance of free beds. There was a decrease in receipts from donations and entertainments, and though the working of the year gave a profit of Rs. 12 the balance sheet still shows that liabilities exceed assets by more than Rs. 10,400. Finance.

## Sanitation.

[Bengal Sanitary Board's Report and the Report of the Chief Engineer, Public Health Department, Bengal, for the year 1926.]

487. The constitution of the Board remained unaltered throughout the year. The Board held five meetings in Calcutta. Six water-supply schemes, two drainage schemes and the Munshiganj sanitation scheme were approved and forwarded to the Local Government. The Board considered the drainage scheme in the Sanitary Board.

Gorabazar Ward of the Berhampur Municipality, but rejected it as unsatisfactory. The Board also supervised the four anti-malarial schemes at Meenglas, Singaran-Toposi, Jangipur and Banka Valley.

Sanitary Engineering.

488. Twenty-two schemes were under construction during the year under the supervision of the Chief Engineer, Public Health Department, including seventeen water-supply schemes at Dacca, Chandpur, Brahmanbaria, Rangamati, Burdwan, Bankura, Midnapore, Suri, Tamluk, Raniganj, Howrah, Naihati, Khulna, Jessore, Patuakhali, Krishnagar and Kalimpong, two drainage schemes at Dacca and Tittaghar, sewerage connection to Government buildings at Dacca and the sanitation scheme for the Reserved Police Lines at Burdwan. In addition, the sinking of tube wells at English Bazar, Rajbari and Chandrakona and seven experimental tube wells at Piasbari Sericultural Nursery, Ramkeli, Sadullahpur, Marghurali and Baruipur were also under the Chief Engineer's supervision. Twelve sketch projects were prepared including ten water-supply schemes at Asansol, Barisal, Faridpur, Bogra, Halishahar, Navadwip, Tangail, Kushtia, Debhatta and Noakhali, a drainage scheme at Rajshahi and a septic tank latrine scheme for the Reserve Police Lines at Bankura. Eight detailed projects were drawn up including five water-supply schemes at Faridpur, English Bazar, Krishnagar, Kalimpong and Chandpur, and sewage connections to the Dacca Collegiate School, Dacca Moslem High School and the Dacca Normal School.

The total number of water-works under operation remained the same as in the previous year. The total capital expenditure on construction of water-works amounted to Rs. 2,47,203 and on drainage projects to Rs. 5,88,291.

## Vaccination.

[Annual Statistical Return and Short Notes on Vaccination in Bengal for the year 1926-27.]

489. The total number of vaccinations performed during the year was 3,278,581, including 1,741,801 primary and 1,536,780 re-vaccinations. Compared with the previous year there was a decrease in primary vaccinations by 9,290 and an increase in re-vaccinations by 257,693. The quinquennial outbreak of small-pox which started in December 1924 continued its ravages throughout the years 1925 and 1926 and exacted the heaviest toll from November 1926 to May 1927. The Bengal Public Health Department co-operated with the district health staff in its attempt to arrest the progress of the disease by lending the services of Sub-Assistant Surgeons, Sanitary Inspectors and the Special Inspectors of Vaccination. The Local Government sanctioned a contribution of Rs. 50,000 to the District Boards to assist in free vaccination.

## The Poisons Act.

[Report on the Working of the Poisons Act for the year 1926.]

490. Two thousand six hundred and thirty licenses were current during the year throughout the Presidency, excluding Calcutta, as against 261 in the previous year, showing an increase of 2,369 licenses. In Calcutta the total number of licenses issued was 556 against 363 in the preceding year, showing an increase of 193 licenses. The sudden increase in the number of licenses throughout the province in the year under review was due mainly to the enforcement of the new Act and Rules. There were 20 prosecutions under the Act, of which 13 were in Calcutta and the remaining 7 in the mufassal. There were 3 convictions for cattle poisoning in the districts of the 24-Parganas and Tippera.

## Health of the Port of Calcutta.

491. The number of inward bound vessels inspected in the port was 1,238 and of outward bound vessels 1,234. Crews and passengers inspected were—

| | Inward. | Outward. |
|---|---|---|
| Crews .. .. .. | 110,274 | 113,664 |
| Passengers .. .. .. | 102,168 | 134,683 |

492. There were four deaths among European seamen in hospitals, while there were 67 cases of venereal diseases. The total deaths among Asiatic population was 171, of which 76 were from accidental injuries, 32 from drowning, and 63 from natural causes.

493. Ten cases of infectious diseases were found on board incoming ships. The patients were removed to hospital and necessary precautionary measures were taken.

## Health of the Port of Chittagong.

494. The total number of ships inspected was 383 against 234 during the previous year, and the number of crews and passengers examined were—

| | Inward. | Outward. |
|---|---|---|
| Crews .. .. .. | 15,968 | 15,712 |
| Passengers .. .. .. | 78,403 | 54,308 |

495. There was no outbreak of cholera, small-pox or plague on any vessel lying in the port.

# CHAPTER VII—INSTRUCTION.

## General System of Public Instruction.

See General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 276-289.

### EDUCATION.

[Progress of Education in Bengal, 1926-27.]

**Educational institutions and expenditure.**

496. During the year under review the number of institutions increased by 2,465. Recognised institutions rose in number from 56,549 to 58,833 and unrecognised institutions from 1,429 to 1,610. The number of pupils attending recognised institutions rose from 2,172,177 to 2,289,876 and pupils attending unrecognised institutions increased from 49,835 to 53,504. Of the total number of pupils reading in all classes of institutions 1,918,228 were males and 425,152 females as compared with 1,824,942 and 397,070, respectively, in the preceding year. The total expenditure on public instruction amounted to about Rs. 398 lakhs of which Rs. 148 lakhs were received from Provincial revenues Rs. 17 lakhs and Rs. 6 lakhs from District and Municipal funds, respectively, Rs. 162 lakhs from fees and Rs. 65 lakhs from other private sources.

While the decline of middle vernacular schools continues, English secondary schools continue to increase in number. But perhaps the most noteworthy event is the proposal made by Calcutta University to substitute the vernacular for English as the medium of instruction and examination. This change of far-reaching importance has been accepted by Government subject to certain conditions to ensure that the standard in the teaching of English will not deteriorate. It is hoped that the change will be effected within the next few years. The period of transition will, doubtless, disclose difficulties, but probably none that may not be solved with time, energy and faith.

The University of Dacca each year becomes more stable and is developing along its own lines. In several directions, the Calcutta University and its colleges have made advances towards more general provision for science and honours work, and the institution of tutorial instruction, while health and physical exercises have not been neglected.

The whole system of European education is undergoing revision and reorganisation. A new type of pre-vocational school has been created and a closer connection with the Indian Universities is being established.

The backward classes are taking greater advantage than before of the educational facilities offered to them and some are fast reaching a stage of literacy which will at no distant date ensure their removal from this category.

Collegiate education.

497. The number of Arts Colleges for men, excluding University classes in Calcutta and Dacca, was 41 as compared with 38 in the preceding year, the increase being due to the establishment of three new colleges, all affiliated to Calcutta University, *viz.*, the Islamia College, Calcutta, the Saadat College, Karatia, and the Pravat Kumar College, Contai. The number of students reading in Arts Colleges for men fell from 23,153 to 22,131. Of the Arts Colleges, 9 were maintained by Government and the rest were under private management. The number of colleges for women remained the same as in the previous year, *viz.*, four, including the Intermediate Department of the Eden High School at Dacca. The expenditure on the upkeep of Arts Colleges for men amounted to Rs. 33,81,031 of which Rs. 11,47,437 was met from Provincial revenues and Rs. 4,200 from Municipal funds; while Rs. 19,37,782 accrued from fees, and Rs. 2,91,612 from other sources. No meeting of the Advisory Committee for Higher Education was held during the year. Pursuant to the recommendations of the Presidency College Committee, a block of land jutting into that college area was acquired at a cost of nearly Rs. 2 lakhs. Provision has also been made in the budget estimate of 1927-28 for the acquisition of two other plots at a cost of about Rs. 1½ lakhs for the further extension of the college. Accepting the recommendations of the Committee, Government have also sanctioned increases in the staff of the college, the number of free and part-free studentships, the number of students that can be admitted to the college, and in admission and tuition fees. The Sanskrit College Committee, which was appointed in August, 1923, presented their report in October, 1926. The Report has recommended the retention of the college and its affiliation in several new subjects to the Pass and Honours standard. It has also recommended that provision should be made for advanced Sanskrit studies for which the college should be affiliated to the M. A. standard. These and other proposals of the Committee are now under the consideration of Government. The Islamia College, for Moslem students, started work in July, 1926. Accommodation has been provided in the college building for 400 students and affiliation was obtained in the several subjects, noted below, up to the I.A., I. Sc., and B.A., (Pass and Honours) standards:—

I. A.—English, Bengali, Urdu, Logic, Persian, History, Arabic, Elements of Civics, Mathematics, Commercial Geography, Commercial Arithmetic and Book-keeping.

I. Sc.—English, Bengali, Urdu, Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry.

B. A.—English, Philosophy, Political Economics, Persian, Arabic, Mathematics, History—all Pass and Honours—as well as Vernacular.

Secondary education.

498. The number of secondary schools for Indian boys rose from 2,647 to 2,675. High and middle English schools increased by 7 and 30, respectively, while middle vernacular schools decreased by 9. In the number of pupils there was an increase in high and middle English schools by 5,628 and 5,758, respectively, and a decrease in middle vernacular schools by 476. The unpopularity of purely vernacular education accounts for the gradual elimination of middle vernacular schools from the educational system. The cost of maintaining secondary schools amounted to more than one crore of rupees, of which more than Rs. 88 lakhs were met from private sources.

The Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Dacca, continues to function; but the limitation of the area under the Board, while it makes careful supervision of schools possible, involves difficulties, which are neither few nor light. Further, the Board has been constituted with a tenure extending to only one year at a time, and the uncertainty created thereby has prevented it from planning any large constructive scheme, extending beyond the narrow limits of a single year.

Primary education.

499. The number of primary schools for Indian boys rose from 37,124 to 38,187, while the number of pupils studying in them increased from 13,32,287 to 13,98,942. The number of pupils reading in the primary classes of secondary schools was 1,83,753 at the close of the year. Of the total number of pupils 7,46,053 or 53·3 per cent. were Muhammadans and 6,42,538 or 45·9 per cent. were Hindus. The total expenditure on primary schools amounted to Rs. 56 lakhs in round figures, of which Rs. 17,74,820 came from Provincial revenues Rs. 7,27,857 from District Board funds, Rs. 2,57,046 from Municipal funds and Rs. 28,30,439 from private sources. Rupees 55,000 were allotted during the year for the construction of Panchayati Union schools for boys and Rs. 95,000 were sanctioned for the maintainance of schools built in previous years. At the close of the year the number of primary schools in Calcutta was 415 of which 94 were free with 11,561 pupils. These free schools are maintained by the Calcutta Corporation.

The number of primary schools for girls was 14,605. The total number of girls in the primary stage was 4,06,137 of whom 3,47,270 were in girls' schools and 58,867 in boys' schools. Of the pupils Hindus were 1,79,206 and Muhammadans 2,20,856.

Training of male teachers.

500. Although it is recognised that those who adopt the teaching profession require a special course of training, the rate of progress hitherto made in training English teachers for secondary schools has been slow, only one in 50 of the 22,000 teachers in secondary schools being trained. Accordingly special efforts are necessary to make up this great deficiency. The creation of a new training college at Chittagong is contemplated and a scheme is under consideration for giving a short course of training to all untrained teachers of English in high, middle and normal schools. and senior madrassahs.

David Hare Training College and the Teachers' Training College at Dacca.

501. During the year 1926-27 there were 98 institutions for the training of teachers for Indian schools, *viz.*, 2 colleges, 6 normal schools and 90 *guru* and maullim training schools. At the colleges at Calcutta and Dacca attended by 136 students, the B. T. is much the more popular course. In connection with the David Hare Training College a Demonstration school was opened in January, 1927.

The two colleges passed 94 students in the B. T. and 22 in the L. T. examination.

First grade training or normal schools.

502. Of the six normal schools five were Government institutions and one was aided. During the year 1926-27 the number of students was 441. The schools passed 97 students.

The Committee of Educational Officers appointed in connection with the re-organisation of the normal schools has submitted a Report, which is under consideration, one noticeable suggestion being that special inducements should be offered to attract to the school students who have already passed the Matriculation Examination.

Guru and muallim training schools.

503. In the 90 *guru* and Muallim training schools there were 1,749 students. The school passed 1,109 students.

With effect from the 1st October, 1925, two state scholarships, each of £250 per annum, tenable for two years in Great Britain were instituted to enable each year two teachers, one Hindu and one Mahammadan, to avail themselves of the special courses of training now available in that country.

Professional and technical education: Bengal Engineering College.

504. The total number of students on its rolls in the Civil Engineering, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Mining and Industrial Departments was 291 as against 294 in the preceding year. The rate of fees was increased slightly for the Civil Engineering Classes and substantially for the Mechanical and Electrical Departments but there was no fall in the number of applicants for admission. The opening of the Indian School of Mines at Dhanbad has led to the closing of the Mining Classes at the College. No fresh admissions have been made in 1927.

Twenty-one candidates passed the B. E. and twenty-two passed the I. E. Examination during the year under report.

School of Ahsanullah Engineering, Dacca.

505. The Ahsanullah School of Engineering, Dacca, had 440 students on the rolls in 1927. The school passed 168 students in the Upper Subordinate and 36 in the Lower Subordinate Examinations.

Government Commercial Institute, Calcutta.

506. The Government Commercial Institute, Calcutta, had on its roll 225 students. The Institute passed 12 students in the Final Commercial Course Examination and 125 in the special examinations. An Expert Committee which was appointed in 1924 to consider the future of the Institution reported against its de-provincialisation as recommended by the Bengal Retrenchment Committee and suggested fresh lines of advance. Their recommendations have been accepted by Government and the details are now under consideration.

The Government School of Art, Calcutta.

507. The Government School of Art had on its roll 335 students as against 354 in the previous year. The slight decrease in the number of students was due to the raising of fees. The expenditure on the school in 1926-27 was Rs. 59,133 of which Rs. 13,744 came from fees. Pupils joined from all parts of India. Among them 2 were Europeans and Anglo-Indians, 6 Christians, 12 Muhammadans, 2 Buddhists, 1 Sikh and the rest Hindus, including 13 of the backward classes. The Commercial Art Section of the School, which was opened as an experiment, proved very popular and the question of its permanent retention is under consideration.

Education of Indian girls and women.

508. The number of recognised schools of all grades and types for Indian girls increased from 13,922 to 14,748 and the number of pupils attending them from 332,099 to 356,492. There were 292 unrecognised schools which had 7,469 pupils on their rolls. Sixty candidates appeared at the B. A. Examination of whom 43 were successful, 15 obtaining honours; 118 candidates appeared at the I. A. and I. Sc. Examinations, of whom 89 came out successful. The Nari-Shiksha Samiti continued to do useful work in primary education. The Tripura Hitashadhini Sabha of Tippera also rendered service, chiefly by examining girls and awarding prizes. The needlework teachers continued to render good service, and the quality of needle-work in schools improved markedly.

Education of Europeans and Anglo-Indians.

509. The number of institutions for the education of Europeans and Anglo-Indians was 62 against 63 in the previous year. The decrease is due to the exclusion of the institution called " Our Lady's Home " which was not recognised as a primary school during this year. Government approved of the new Code of Regulations for European Schools which had been under consideration for some time past. The intention of the revised Code is to provide a measure

of freedom in development, while a way of approach is given towards the higher courses of the Calcutta University. The Code contemplates a register of teachers and a state provident fund—two measures which will improve the quality and status of teachers. The Director of Public Instruction was authorised to delegate his powers in respect of the award of free-boarding grant, maintenance grant and cadet grant to the Inspector of European Schools. A Course of Salesmanship was sanctioned by Government, as an additional vocational course to be taught in higher grade schools conducted under the Code of Regulations for European Schools.

Muhammadan education.

510. The number of Muhammadan pupils in all educational institutions for Indians was 1,139,949. The proportion of Muhammadan pupils to the total number of pupils was 48·8 per cent., but the Muhammadans formed only 15·5 per cent. of students in the High School stage, and 14·2 per cent. in Arts and 14 per cent. in Professional Colleges. These figures emphasize for yet another year the great strides that must be made in higher education by the Muhammadans if the community is to take its proper place in Bengal.

During the year under report, the Islamia College was established in Calcutta, affiliated to the University and reserved for Moslems. At the close of the year there were two Islamic Intermediate Colleges (although a third has since been sanctioned), with 119 pupils. The lotal number of madrassahs was 538; of these 17 were high madrassahs and 521 other madrassahs. Out of the 218 candidates who appeared at the High Madrassah Examination conducted by the Dacca Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education 115 were successful. In the final examination for Junior Madrassahs 1,228 candidates appeared in the year under report and 731 passed. The number of maktabs was 20,723 with 6,28,446 pupils. Although numbers in the primary and maktab stages are large yet there is little if any real progress, as the pupils are concentrated in classes I and II, in which a child is not able to attain to literacy.

## Literature and the Press.

The Bengal Library and the working of Act XXV of 1867.

511. The total number of publications registered was 4,583 of which 3,330 were books and 1,253 periodicals. Of the former 2,914 were original publications (against 3,011 in 1925) and 416 republications and translations (against 247 in 1925). The number of educational books (including school text-books, keys, notes, etc.) fell from 1,333 in 1925 to 1,121 in 1926 which, considering the quality of these publications, need cause no regret. The number of non-educational books rose to 2,209 from 1,925 in the previous year.

The Press.

512. The total number of newspapers and periodicals both English and vernacular printed and published during the year under review was 685. This number includes 239 newspapers and 446 periodicals. Of the total number of publications 175 were in English, 389 in Bengali, and the remainder in other languages.

One hundred and seventy-eight new newspapers and periodicals were started and 164 ceased to exist during the year.

Literary publications.

513. The year 1925 showed a further increase in literary activity. The general standard of the output was above the average except in the case of History. The number of Muhammadan writers seems to be steadily increasing and some are fairly on the way to making their mark in certain branches of literature.

Dramatic productions of note were Rabindra Nath Tagore's "Chir Kumar Sabha" (The Life-long Bachelors' Association), "Sudhbodh" (Complete Discharge of the Debt) and "Natir Puja" (The Dancing Girl's Worship). The last which was staged privately in Calcutta for the benefit of the Viswa Bharati Institution by its girl pupils is a Buddhistic story of the highest sacrifice for the cause of religion. The superb dancing introduced in the acting of the play by the poet's pupils has been hailed as the first step towards the revival of a dead art among Bengalis.

Bengali fiction was somewhat more varied in character than usual and the general standard slightly above the average. The most popular novelist, Babu Sarat Chandra Chatterjee, found a new vent for his morbid sentimentalism in a bitterly virulent attack on the alleged land-grabbing propensities of the European powers and the suspected political aims of the various Christian missions in Asia. The most remarkable book of the year was "Maner Paras" (Touch of the Mind) by Mr. Dilip Kumar Ray. This purports to be a record of the supposed experiences, mainly social, of a young Bengali scholar in Cambridge who gave up his Engineering studies there to learn western music at a famous centre in Europe.

Literature on the plastic and pictorial arts sank even to a lower level than usual.

Proscriptions and prosecutions.

514. During the year only one leaflet entitled "Utho Jago" was forfeited.

Prosecutions under section 124A, Indian Penal Code, were instituted against six newspapers, five of which resulted in conviction and one in withdrawal of the case on the filing of a written apology. Under section 153A, Indian Penal Code, eighteen prosecutions were started resulting in fourteen convictions, three acquittals and one withdrawal on the filing of an apology. Proceedings under section 108, Criminal Procedure Code, were also instituted successfully in three out of five cases.

515. The outstanding feature of the year was the intense communal feeling which pervaded the whole of Bengal and for which the Indian press must be held largely responsible. On the outbreak of the Calcutta riots in April, 1926, almost every Indian newspaper, forgetful of the larger issues at stake, seemed to lose its balance and ranging itself uncompromisingly on the side of its own community, proceeded to fill its columns with biased accounts of alleged incidents. Several reminders that a terrorist conspiracy was still in existence were afforded by the discovery during the year of bombs and other lethal weapons, but in spite of this there was an ever-increasing demand on the part of the Indian press for the unconditional release of all political prisoners and the newspaper *Forward* devoted much of its space to a vigorous campaign with this end in view. As in previous years the press made much of the alleged sufferings of the detenus, who were held up as heroes and martyrs to the national cause. Topics discussed in the press.

No great change took place in the political situation during the year and as a result of the feeling between Hindus and Muhammadans there was a natural tendency to subordinate political to communal considerations. Intense absorption in this topic directed attention to some extent from Government, which was not attacked with quite the same unanimity or venom as in the past.

In spite of internal dissensions owing to the lack of a leader to take the place of the late Mr. C. R. Das the Swarajya party remained the best organised, and therefore the most formidable political party, and through its organ, the *Forward*, continued to sway a large section of public opinion. Like every other party, however, it suffered as a result of the communal tension and also from a growing desire amongst a large section of the people to co-operate with the Government in the working of the reforms. This trend of feeling became apparent in a greater or less degree in many papers during the year and eventually found expression through the "Responsivists" a moderate party which came into prominence under Mr. B. Chakravarty, Editor of the Bengalee and until August a member of the Ministry.

## Literary Societies.

**See General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 293-95.**

### ARTS AND SCIENCES.

516. The Government School of Art, Calcutta, had an enrolment of 335 students on the 31st March, 1927, against 354 in the previous year. Of these 164 belonged to the Elementary Department, 43 to the Industrial Department, 39 to the Draftsman Department, 83 to the Fine Arts Department and 6 to the Teachers' Government School of Art, Calcutta.

Department. Of the students 312 were Hindus and 12 Muhammadans; the rest belonged to other communities. The upkeep of the school cost Rs. 59,133 of which Rs. 45,389 was provided from Provincial revenues. A Commercial Art Section has been started on an experimental basis, to train students in such subjects as designing, poster drawing, advertising, and illumination.

**Government Art Gallery, Calcutta.**

517. The practice has been continued of lending to the Government School of Art, selected specimens of Art objects from the Gallery, useful as examples to students. The Gallery has also been used regularly by students from other art institutions as well as by local artisans and others from various parts of India. The maintenance charges of the Gallery amounted to Rs. 3,867.

**Other Schools of Art.**

518. There were 5 other schools of Art in the Presidency, to three of which grants were given by Government.

**Industrial education.**

519. An account of the progress of industrial education will be found in the section on the work of the Director of Industries, included in Chapter IV of this report.

## CHAPTER VIII—Miscellaneous.

See General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 298-301.

### Ecclesiastical.

Establishment.

520. The Ecclesiastical Establishment in Bengal from April, 1926, to September, 1927, paid entirely or in part by Government, consisted of the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, the Archdeacon of Calcutta, the Domestic Chaplain to the Bishop, the Registrar of the Diocese, 9 Chaplains of the Church of England, 12 Clergymen of the Additional Clergy or other Societies, 3 Chaplains of the Church of Scotland, the Most Reverend Archbishop Dr. Ferdinand Perier, S.J., and 4 Priests of the Roman Catholic Church.

### Hedjaz Pilgrims.

521. During the year local Haj Committees were re-organised and useful work was done by the dissemination of information among intending pilgrims. Two ships with 2,117 pilgrims sailed from Calcutta in the months of April and May. The number of pilgrims embarking at Calcutta is still considerably less than was anticipated when the re-opening of the port was under discussion. This may be attributed to the influence of Moallems whose activities were mentioned last year. A proposal to legislate to secure some degree of control over these people is under consideration.

### Chemical Examiner's Department.

[Report of the Chemical Examiner for the year 1926.]

General.

522. Dr. Hiralal Sinha held charge of the department up to the 27th September, 1926, after which Major T. C. Boyd, I.M.S., took over charge.

Analytical cases.

523. In connection with the contribution payable by other Governments for analytical work done in the department, a revised rate of Rs. 15-8 per article was introduced during the year under report with retrospective effect from 1924-25.

During the year 7,021 articles were examined showing an increase of 643 over the figures of the previous year. In the General Analytical Department, 2,296 examinations were made as compared with 2,223 in the previous year. One hundred and thirteen articles in connection with alleged forgery of currency notes and 90 articles relating to counterfeit coining cases, were examined as against 103 and 15 articles, respectively, in the previous year.

Medico-legal cases.

524. The number of medico-legal cases referred to this department for examination in 1926 was 2,212 as against 1,896 in 1925. The number of human poisoning cases investigated was 1,180, showing an increase of 240 over that of the previous year. Animal poisoning cases showed a decrease of 26, while in stain cases there was an increase of 104. The total number of articles examined during the year rose from 4,046 to 4,606.

The percentage of detection in human poisoning cases was 21·33 as compared with 36·70 in 1925, while in animal cases the percentage decreased from 56·52 to 45·88. Arsenic, aconite, oleander, and opium were the principal poisons found in the case of human beings, while arsenic easily held first place in the case of cattle.

## Veterinary Department.

[Annual Report of the Veterinary College and of the Civil Veterinary Department for the year 1926-27.]

Bengal Veterinary College.

525. During the year there was an increase in the number of students attending the College, there being 125 on the rolls at the close of the session as against 100 in the previous year. At the beginning of the present session there were 168 enrolments, the increase being probably due almost entirely to the re-introduction of Government stipends for Bengal students. These had been discontinued in accordance with a recommendation of the Retrenchment Committee with effect from May, 1923,—a step which was followed by a substantial drop in the number of Bengal students in the two succeeding years.

During the year the Committee of Management of the College was reconstituted and its duties defined.

College Hospital.

526. The number of patients treated and operations performed showed little variation, *viz.*, 2,562 and 374, respectively, as compared with 2,587 and 296 in the previous year.

Raymond Research Laboratory.

527. Valuable work was as usual carried out at the Raymond Research Laboratory, in examination of pathological specimens of brains for rabies, etc.

Civil Veterinary Department.

528. The total number of deaths of animals due to epidemic disease was 35,719 as compared with 33,224 in the previous year. The Director attributes this not so much to any actual increase in the prevalence of disease as to a better system of intelligence. Rinderpest with 33,405 deaths accounted for over 93 per cent. of the casualties, while 1,492 animals died of hæmorrhagic septicæmia, 464 of these being in the district of Midnapore. Khulna

and Bakarganj had over 4,400 deaths each from rinderpest, Chittagong running them close with 3,239. There was an increase in the number of cattle inoculated, *viz.*, 206, 616 as against 173, 762 in the previous year. It is noteworthy that the Sodepur Pinjrapole had 189 deaths from contagious diseases, a total which exceeds that of either Cooch Behar, Darjeeling, Bogra, Hooghly or Howrah. This, however, is an immense improvement on the two previous years when 1,746 and 865 casualties from that cause were reported.

The usual work of the Veterinary Assistant Surgeons was carried on, and 126, 661 cases were treated as against 100, 830 in the previous year. It is increasingly clear that the usefulness of veterinary service is widely appreciated, and the appointment of a Cattle Breeding Expert towards the close of the year should give an impetus to the department. The staff of reserve Veterinary Assistant Surgeons was increased by 4.

529. Two new dispensaries, one at Kharagpur and one at Tangail, were opened during the year and there were 4 more Veterinary Assistant Surgeons employed by local bodies. There was again an increase in the number of cases treated at dispensaries, *viz.*, 56, 184 as against 51,025 or nearly 10 per cent. The District Board of Faridpur have provided funds for the construction of a serum cellar. Dispensaries.

530. The department was actively represented in the Demonstration Train sent out over the broad gauge system by the Eastern Bengal Railway publicity department. This enterprising development was a great success, and the Veterinary Adviser reports favourably on its results. Demonstration.

## Zoological Garden, Calcutta.

[Annual Report of the Honorary Committee for the year 1926-27.]

531. The total receipts of the garden fell from Rs. 1,27,918-11-4 to Rs. 1,13,432-2-7 and the expenditure from Rs. 1,13,694-11-7 to Rs. 93,399-0-5, leaving a closing balance of Rs. 19,972-7-2. During the year the visitors to the garden numbered 826,211 showing a decrease of 204,436 as compared with the previous year. The gate money realised declined from Rs. 72,500-10 to Rs. 58,486-4. The fall in the receipts and the number of visitors was due to communal disturbances in the earlier part of the year. The garden was, as usual, open free to the public one day in each month, and 35,942 persons took advantage of this privilege, as against 38,947 persons in the preceding year. Finance and Statistics.

The high standard of the collections generally has been maintained, and many interesting additions have been made. The practice of exchanging specimens with other similar institutions was continued, and the gardens benefited considerably from the generosity of private donors.

## Administration of the Cinematograph Act, 1926-27.

532. During the year under review, the Bengal Board of Censors held 11 meetings and certified 738 films. Six hundred and seventy-nine films were examined by the Board's Inspector. Certificates were refused for 16 films and 61 films were passed after objectionable portions had been excised.

A new feature during the year was the introduction by the various railways in the province of travelling cinema cars for propaganda purposes. These exhibitions have been exempted under section 9 of the Cinematograph Act.

The Government of India have recently appointed a Committee to advise on the most suitable method of securing a uniform standard of censorship and also to study the economic and cultural aspects of the cinematograph industry in India.

## Administration of the Indian Electricity Act, 1910.

533. During the year under report five new licenses to supply energy were issued, namely, (*a*) the Kamarhatty, Belgharia and Agarpara Electric License, (*b*) the Dum Dum Electric License, and (*c*) the Howrah License, all to the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation, Limited, (*d*) the Narayanganj Electric License, to Messrs. Chakrabarty & Sons, and (*e*) the Chittagong Electric License to the Chittagong Engineering and Electric Supply Company, Limited. Applications were received for the grant of licenses for supplying electric energy in the towns of Rangpur, Serajganj and Berhampore. The increase in the number of applications for licenses in the larger municipalities shows that there is a growing appreciation of the possibilities of electrical supply in the province; but in some cases, applications have been made without due regard to the amount and source of capital required for such work.

The Raniganj Coalfields Electric License, 1920, granted to Messrs. Kilburn & Company, Calcutta, was revoked with effect from the 10th July, 1926.

In the area of the Hooghly-Chinsurah license, held by the East India Electric Supply and Traction Company, Limited,

the source of supply has been changed from the original oil-driven plant erected by the licensees to the power station of the Gourepore Jute Mills. Nevertheless, numerous complaints continue to be received regarding the service given by the licensees, and much remains to be done to make the enterprise a complete success.

Two extensions of time were granted for the completion of the compulsory work in connection with the Burdwan Electric License. The scheme was nearly completed, but a regular and continuous supply was not given to consumers.

Sanction was granted under section 27 of the Indian Electricity Act, 1910, for the supply of energy by the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation to the Port Engineering Works at Howrah, which are situated outside the licensed area specified in the Howrah Electric License, 1926.

There were 14 accidents during the year against 12 in 1925; and 7 deaths in connection with the generation, transmission and supply or use of electric energy against 11 in 1925.

## Indian Territorial Force.

534. The Secretary of State for India has sanctioned the proposals of the Government of India on the Report of the Auxiliary and Territorial Forces Committee and the main recommendations summarised on pages 39-40 of the Report will be carried out with certain exceptions, the most important being that the Government of India did not agree that the Auxiliary force and the urban units of the Indian Territorial Force should be liable for general military service.

The further expansion of the Calcutta University Battalion is under contemplation as well as the formation of a Training Corps at Dacca University. The latter scheme is to be introduced only if recruits in sufficient numbers are prepared to defray the cost of certain equipment.

## APPENDIX I.

### Speech delivered in the Council on the 26th March, 1927, by His Excellency the Governor of Bengal (the Earl of Lytton).

GENTLEMEN,—I have come here to-day to bid you farewell and through you, its representatives, to bid farewell to the province of Bengal with which I have been intimately associated for the last five years. At such a moment I wish to divest myself of the official limitations attaching to my office and to address you for the last time not as a Governor but as a friend. It has been my privilege to be associated with some part at least of each of the first three Councils elected under the revised Constitution of 1919. On former occasions I have addressed these Councils on specific matters connected with legislation or with the policy of the Government of the day. To-day I shall make no reference to particular questions except to thank you for having passed the budget and for the provision which you have made therein for the various departments of Government during the coming year. Nor shall I attempt a general survey of the last five years. Those years have now passed into history and must await the verdict of posterity. I stand in the presence of the representatives of all the political parties in this province. I want, if possible, to say nothing which can be controverted by any one of them. The period in which we have been brought together and worked either in agreement with or in opposition to each other has been a transitional period in which some have tried to prove the value and others the futility of the present constitution. I recognise that both have been sincere. It will be my endeavour, when I return to England, to be equally sincere and to interpret as fairly as I can to my own countrymen both the merits and the defects of the system of Government which after full enquiry in this country they hoped would be found suited to existing conditions. I trust you will agree that I have rightly interpreted the facts of the situation, if I tell them that, while all parties in India desire the main principles of the British Constitution to be applied in this country as nearly as possible, no constitution is likely to be acceptable, which proceeds on the assumption that the political conditions in India are similar to those which exist in Great Britain, and equally no constitution is likely to work well, which is based more upon an abstract political theory than on a study of the actual political conditions of the country. The existence of an Executive which cannot be removed by the Legislature and of a

Legislature which cannot be removed by the Executive is not calculated to produce harmony between the two, and without harmony between the Legislature and the Executive efficient Government is impossible. To ensure harmony an elected Legislature requires an Executive responsible to it and removable by it, and an irremovale Executive requires a nominated Legislature. A system which secures the supremacy of the Executive not by the support of the Legislature, but by the exercise of an overriding authority is not, I think, proving the best preparation for full responsible Government. It will be agreed, I think, by all that we have a difficult machine to work and the machine has been more difficult to work in Bengal than elsewhere because of the inequitable financial basis on which the new Government was established in this province. The Meston Settlement has been a mill-stone round the necks of successive Governments, rendered all the heavier by the period of trade depression which followed the inauguration of the Reforms. The remission of all provincial contributions which we are promised in the near future will not help but only accentuate the handicap which has been placed upon Bengal, for the inequity consisted not in the amount of our contribution to the Government of India, but in the inadequacy of the sources of revenue made available to the province. Those who criticise the failure of the Reforms in Bengal must not, therefore, ascribe it to any special perversity in the Bengali race, but should recognise that apart from the defects of the Constitution itself which Bengal has shared in common with other parts of India, this province has been placed under a handicap peculiar to itself.

The Reserved Departments of Government have suffered because they are reserved and therefore attractive targets for criticism, and the Transferred Departments have suffered because there was no money for their development. There has been little attraction to political parties, to undertake responsibility for administering departments that could not be adequately developed and party unity has been impaired by the rivalry of individual ambitions. Such conditions have facilitated political blackmail and led to charges of corruption—evils which must be attributed not to the country but to the system. In Great Britain during the evolution of the Constitution in the 17th and 18th centuries when powerful families contended for power similar evils were prevalent to a far greater extent. The remedy was found in the extension of the franchise and in the growth of organised political parties. The same remedy will no doubt be found in India, but an extension of education is an indispensable preliminary to the first, and adequate resources for the development of local needs are necessary for the second.

I am perhaps embarking on rather a wide field in making these remarks, but I am anxious that the attention of the public, both in India and in Great Britain, should be directed to what appears to me to be some of the fundamental and little recognised causes of the failure to turn to the best account the present stage in the political development of India.

During the life-time of this Council a new Parliamentary Commission will arrive in India to study the experience of the last eight or nine years and to hear opinions from all sections of the population regarding the alterations, if any, which are desirable in the Constitution of 1919. During that enquiry you will have an opportunity of explaining the past and of recommending changes in the future. May I suggest to you, in the capacity which I have asked you to allow me to assume to-day, that the larger the measure of agreement you can secure the greater will be the value of the evidence you can give on both these points? It is for this reason that I have ventured to express an opinion on some of the larger issues involved in the framing of a Constitution in order that in the time that remains you may be considering these issues and crystallising opinion upon them.

I have spoken of one aspect of the problem which has been particularly marked in this province. May I mention another difficulty which is also especially acute in this province and for the study of which Bengal offers very full material? I refer to the difficulty of reconciling the rival interests of Muhammadans and Hindus. These two communities are divided in nearly equal numbers in the province and the political rivalry between them—in itself a perfectly natural and healthy symptom—has led during the past year to very deplorable local riots. To say that such rivalry is an insuperable obstacle to any constitutional advance would be absurd, but to ignore altogether such a fundamental fact would be equally foolish. I welcome the fellowship movement which has been started in the last few days with the object of effecting a greater tolerance on the part of each community towards the religious susceptibilities of the other, but that movement will fail in its object if it refuses to recognise that the animosity which has recently become so marked is political even more than religious in its origin. So long as either community aims at utilizing the machinery of the Constitution for the purpose of dominating the other, the antagonism will not merely persist but increase. The only road to peace which offers any hope of success is the one which the late Mr. C. R. Das tried to follow and which I have equally tried to follow in the formation of Ministries, namely, the organisation of parties on political rather than communal lines. How best to frame a democratic constitution, which will facilitate this object, and, whilst safeguarding the due

representation of all communities, especially those which are in a minority, to make all the representatives answerable to a mixed rather than to a communal electorate, is, therefore, another issue which I commend to your special consideration. If the leading men of all parties and all communities in Bengal will concentrate their attention upon this problem with which they are so specially qualified to deal instead of waiting for outside suggestions which each can criticise from their respective points of view, I feel sure that a solution will be found even before the Parliamentary Commission arrives, and in that case Bengal will justify the claim it is proud to make of leading the political thought of India. The suggestion that the British Parliament must decide the time and form of each successive stage in the development of the Indian Constitution is often resented in this country and in one sense very naturally resented. But, gentlemen, there is no need to wait for Parliament if you can yourselves find a solution of the admitted difficulties which beset the path of constitutional development. The ratification by Parliament of agreements reached in this country would be an easy matter and involve no humiliation. It is only attempts to force prematurely a one-sided solution by violence and intimidation that bring strife and humiliation.

In conclusion, I desire to assure you that nothing which has happened during my term of office in this province has at all shaken my faith in the necessity for developing the Indian Constitution as rapidly as possible on lines which will provide for national self-expression. I may have found the difficulties to be greater than I knew before I came here, but difficulties are made to be overcome. It is the test of statesmanship to recognise them and with unwearing patience and undiminished faith to overcome them. I have made many friends in the last five years. Their friendship I value highly and shall strive to retain. For this country I shall ever retain a genuine affection and I count it a high honour to have been allowed for a short time and however imperfectly to serve it.

Gentlemen, I bid you farewell and I wish you one and all success in your efforts to advance the interests of your country and its people.

## APPENDIX II.

### Speech delivered in the Council on the 23rd August, 1927, by His Excellency the Governor of Bengal (Sir Francis Stanley Jackson).

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—I welcome this opportunity of meeting the Council in session for the first time since I took up my office in Bengal. You meet somewhat later than usual, but I was advised that, in view of the small amount of business the Government had to put before you, a slight postponement would not be likely to prove seriously inconvenient.

I am personally grateful for the delay, as it has enabled me to complete my tour in Eastern Bengal and thereby gain an experience, which I feel is of great value to me; and the possession of some first-hand knowledge of the conditions prevailing in that portion of the Presidency makes it easier for me to address you with confidence.

I have had the opportunity of visiting some important district where I have had the good fortune to meet personally a considerable number of prominent people of all classes and communities in various localities, who readily and generously discussed with me many questions of local and general interest. It was a particular pleasure to meet several members of this Council in ther individual constituencies. Everywhere I met with a welcome which I always believed I might expect from a naturally kind-hearted people, but which actually far exceeded my expectations. I feel that knowledge gained by seeing with my own eyes and hearing with my own ears is of greater value than any I could have acquired from other sources at my disposal.

Gentlemen, you will be asked to deal with a number of important Bills in the near future, some of which I may now outline. The Bengal Borstal Schools Bill deals with what appears to be an urgent requirement in this Presidency. It provides for youthful offenders against the law being placed in special institutions, where freed from contact with habitual criminals, they may be given a chance, from example and training in useful occupations, to fit themselves to lead the lives of respectable citizens.

Three other Bills will be presented, *viz.*—

(1) The Calcutta Vehicles Bill;

(2) The Bengal Land Development Bill; and

(3) The Bengal Mining Settlements Bill.

A Bill of exceptional importance which the Government hope to introduce this session, but which unfortunately has not yet been returned by the Government of India, is the Rural Primary Education Bill. The urgent and crying need for a Bill dealing with popular education in rural areas is too obvious to require much comment from me to-day.

During the five months I have been in India, I have endeavoured to make myself acquainted with the educational system and requirements in this Presidency. What has impressed me most forcibly is the great difference in the annual expenditure upon University education and that upon primary education. Between 1920-21 and 1925-26, the Government contribution for University expenditure has increased by over Rs. 13 lakhs to a total of Rs. 37 lakhs, whilst contributions towards primary education have remained stationary at Rs. 25 lakhs. I am not suggesting that too much has been spent on University education, but I think it is a matter for serious consideration whether enough is spent on primary education.

I have also been struck during my tour by the number of Municipalities, District Boards and individuals who have earnestly advocated the need for immediate action in connection with the introduction of free primary education in rural areas. The opinion was generally expressed that the people would be prepared to make the necessary sacrifice to attain it. Free primary education for this Presidency is a large and serious proposition, but it is one which I believe must be boldly faced in the near future.

The next subject upon which I should like to say a few words is one which I have reason to know is the cause of much anxiety and concern to all. In March last year, speaking in the Legislative Assembly, with reference to persons detained under Regulation III, and the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, Sir Alexander Muddiman made a statement which represented the views of this Government and which were approved by the Government of India. He said:—

"The policy of Government regarding those who have been detained under Regulation III and the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, in connection with the Bengal revolutionary conspiracy, has been and still is, that the detention of no man should last longer than is essential in the interests of public safety, and we are anxious to pursue, as quickly as possible, the gradual release of individuals, whose conduct gives reason for hoping that they will not abuse their liberty."

That was a definite statement of policy pronounced upon this vexed question just before I took up my office in Bengal. There has been no change in this policy upon which I have considered

it my duty to proceed. Since that statement was made and after most careful consideration of the whole situation in all its aspects, and after consultation with my Government, I considered that the conditions prevailing in Bengal justified an accelleration of the rate of release, and action was taken accordingly.

I find that at the end of March this year, there were in Jail 54 under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, and 16 under Regulation III.

To-day there are 32 under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, and 8 under Regulation III.

At the end of March this year 26 had been released from restraint. To-day the number stands at 60.

Provided no untoward event occurs, and the conditions at present prevailing in Bengal continue and the conduct of those realeased justifies the action taken in their cases, I hope that a large number of those now detained will have been transferred or released before the end of the year.

I shall continue to give my own personal attention to each individual case.

I feel that I have arrived in India at a moment of exceptional interest. In the ordinary course of events the Statutory Commission, as laid down under the Act of 1919, will start its investigations within the next two years. Their primary duty will appear to be, after investigation, to report upon the results of the working of the Act of 1919 throughout India, and upon this report will hang the decisions of momentous importance to the future Government of India. I am hopeful that during the period left before the Commission starts its work, we, in Bengal, may be able to produce wise and statesman-like legislation to prove ourselves worthy of the confidence of the British Parliament in our ability to manage our own affair. There is unquestionable opportunity for the provision of legislation, urgently needed and equally urgently demanded, the obvious benefits of which should not be withheld from the people.

I note on the paper a motion expressing "no confidence" in the Ministers. This is a serious resolution and one which, I am sure, has not been put down without due consideration of the possible consequences. All hon'ble members will appreciate their personal responsibility on a vote of this kind. My duty is quite clear. In case of an adverse vote I shall accept the decision of the Council and it will not be possible for the Ministers to retain their offices. It might be necessary to prorogue the House in order to enable me to fill their places.

My first meeting with this Council, with which in the ordinary course of events I must be brought into close contact during the next few years, is for me an occurrence of exceptional interest. When I see these crowded benches, it gives me cause for hopefulness. My sole aim is to do my duty fairly and justly towards Bengal and its people, and with such a desire I know all of you are equally animated, though our endeavours to attain our aim may be by varying methods. If this aim be our guiding principle, I shall not be without hope of fruitful results.

I pray that your deliberations may receive the blessings and guidance of Providence.

B. G. Press—21-5-1928—213M—530—R. D'S. & others.

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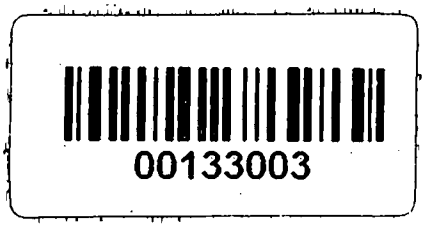
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